A DEFENCE

OF THE

Answer made unto the Nine *Questions* or *Positions* sent from *New-England*,

Against the

REPLY THERETO

BY

That Reverend servant of Christ,

Mr. JOHN BALL;

Entituled,

A Tryall of the New Church-way in New-England *and in* Old.

Wherin, beside a more full opening of sundry particulars concerning Liturgies, Power of the Keys, matter of the visible Church, &c. is more largely handled, that controversie concerning the Catholick visible Church; tending to cleare up the Old-way of Christ in *New-England* Churches.

By { *Iohn Allin* / *Tho. Shepard* } Pastor of { *Dedham* / *Cambridge* } in *New-England*.

Veritas nihil erubescit præterquam abscondi, *Tertul.*

Sua silentia amat Spiritus per quæ nobis illabitur, seq; insinuat cupidis non gloriæ sed cognoscendæ veritatis, *Melanct.*

Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his Brethren, Deut 33.16.

London, Printed by *R. Cotes* for *Andrew Crooke*, and are to be sold at the Green Dragon in Pauls Church yard, 1648.

C 13 H H . 9 : 30 *

The Preface to the Reader.

IT *was the profeſſion of the Lord Jeſus before* Pilate, *when he queſtioned with him about his Kingdome,* John 18. 37. *That for this cauſe he was born and came into the world, to beare witneſſe of the truth. Many truths about the ſpirituall Kingdom of Chriſt hath he imparted to us, if therfore we be born into the world, or ſent into this Wilderneſſe to beare witneſſe to his truth, it is unto us reward ſufficient, that we ſhould be witneſſes thereunto, even to the utmoſt parts of the Earth. Wee confeſſe wee have been too ſlow in this ſervice of Chriſt, not having to this day ſet forth an unanimous Confeſſion of that Form of wholſome words which is Preached, received, and profeſſed in theſe Churches of the Lord Jeſus; and which we are not unmindfull of, though our diſtances, and other difficulties may delay the opportunity. But this in the meane time we profeſſe in generall, That (ſo farre as wee know) there is the ſame bleſſed Spirit of Truth breathing in the Miniſtery of the Country; the ſame Faith embraced and profeſſed in the Churches, which is generally received as the Orthodox Doctrine of the Goſpel, in the beſt reformed Churches, and particularly by our godly learned Brethren of* England *and* Scotland. *And though errours have ſprung up among us, and ſome are gone out from us, that we feare were not of us, yet*

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wee have borne witnesse against them, and by the blessing of God, by the breath of Christ in the mouths of his servants they have been blasted. Neither doe we understand that these Churches are accused of any errours about the saving truths of the Gospel, and therefore we thought our selves not so much called of God to such a Confession at present, as to cleare up to the world those Truths we professe about the kingdome and government of Christ in his Churches, which is the great worke of this age, and of this nick of time. And yet here also we feare that we have been too slack; for though it bee said, VVee are the Volunteers, such as cry up this way, &c. and so it seemes wee are apprehended to bee one cause of these present differences: yet if things be well weighed, we may seem rather to bee farre behinde in the duty that lyes upon us. Indeed some briefe Answers sent over to some particular persons, to satisfie Brethren what our practise is, (with some briefe touch of our reasons) rather then to discusse those points, have been printed by some without our knowledge, or assent, upon what grounds they best know. And some short Treatises by some reverend Brethren have been published to declare their affectionate desires of the unanimous endevours of all our deare Brethren, for a generall and holy Reformation: But what hath been said or done that either may justly offend the minds of the godly, provoke their spirits, disunite their affections, or hinder a godly Reformation? Yea, wee have been too slow to cleare our Doctrine and practise from the many objections, harsh interpretations, and manifold criminations cast upon the same, wherein wee feare our lothnesse to intermeddle in these Controversies for feare of making the breach wider amongst Brethren; and our desire rather to attend what light we might receive from others in these points wherein wee professe our selves seekers after the truth, have made us guilty of neglect in this our duty. But now we see our selves pressed hereto, by a necessity of justifying our wayes a-

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gainſt the many aſperſions caſt upon them, as well as againſt the Reaſons uſed againſt them, for wee perceive by the firſt Letter of our Brethren, how the with-drawing of Chriſtians from the Liturgy was imputed to us, and by this Reply both in the Epiſtle and divers paſſages, wee cannot but ſee what apprehenſions are raiſed of us; yea, many are apt to think, that if we had ſaid nothing, yet our very act in forſaking the Churches of God in our deare native Country, and the Cauſe of Chriſt there, together with the practiſe of theſe Churches thought to bee ſo different from the reformed Churches, have been, not onely a great weakening to the hands of the Godly, (that have ſtood by the Cauſe of Chriſt) but alſo have cauſed great diſturbance to the Reformation in hand: To which much might be ſaid, but that wee ſhould exceed the bounds of an Epiſtle. Yet let us intreat all the Godly wiſe, to conſider and look back upon the ſeaſon of this great enterpriſe, undertaken by us, and the manner of our proceedings in it, with the admirable workings of Gods Providence firſt and laſt about it; and we think (though we were ſilent) they may eaſily ſatisfie themſelves, whether this was of God or men, a ſinfull neglect of the Cauſe of Chriſt, or a manifeſt atteſtation to the truth, by open profeſſion againſt Corruptions of Worſhip in uſe, and for the neceſsity of reformation of the Church; and that confirmed by no ſmall degree of ſufferings for the ſame. For was it not a time when humane Worſhip and inventions were growne to ſuch an intolerable height, that the conſciences of Gods ſaints and ſervants inlightened in the truth) could no longer bear them? was not the power of the tyrannicall Prelates ſo great, that like a ſtrong Current carryed all down ſtreame before it, what ever was from the law, or otherwiſe ſet in their way? Did not the hearts of men generally faile them? Where was the people to bee found that would cleave to their godly Miniſters in their ſufferings, but rather thought it their diſcretion, to provide for their owne quiet and ſafety? Yea, when

ſome freely in zeale of the Truth preached or profeſſed againſt the corruptions of the times, did not ſome take offence at it, judge it raſhneſſe, and to bee againſt all rules of diſcretion, who ſince are ready to cenſure us for deſerting the Cauſe? Many then thought, it is an evill time, the prudent ſhall hold their peace, and might wee not ſay, this is not our reſting place? And what would men have us doe in ſuch a caſe? Muſt wee ſtudy ſome diſtinctions to ſalve our Conſciences in complying with ſo manifold corruptions in Gods Worſhip? or ſhould wee live without Gods ordinances, becauſe wee could not partake in the corrupt adminiſtration thereof? or content our ſelves to live without thoſe ordinances of Gods Worſhip and Communion of Saints which hee called us unto, and our ſoules breathed after? or ſhould wee forſake the publique Aſſemblies, and joyne together in private ſeparated Churches? how unſufferable it would then have been, the great offence that now is taken at it, is a full evidence. And if in Cities, or ſome ſuch great Townes that might have been done, yet how was it poſſible for ſo many ſcattered Chriſtians all over the Countrey? It is true, we might have ſuffered, if wee had ſought it, wee might eaſily have found the way to have filled the Priſons, and ſome had their ſhare therein. But whether wee were called thereunto, when a wide doore was ſet open of liberty otherwiſe; and our witneſſe to the truth, (through the malignant policy of thoſe times) could not bee open before the world, but rather ſmothered up in cloſe priſons or ſome ſuch wayes, together with our ſelves, wee leave to bee conſidered. Wee cannot ſee but the rule of Chriſt to his Apoſtles and Saints, and the practiſe of Gods Saints in all ages, may allow us this liberty as well as others, to fly into the Wilderneſſe from the face of the Dragon. But if it had been ſo, that the Godly Miniſters and Chriſtians that fled to New-England, were the moſt timorous and faint hearted of all their Brethren, that ſtayed behinde, and that

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those sufferings were nothing in comparison of their Brethrens (for why should any boast of sufferings?) yet who doth not know that the Spirit who gives various gifts, and all to profit withall, in such times doth single out every one to such worke, as hee in wisdome intends to call them unto? And whom the Lord will honour by suffering for his Cause, by imprisonment, &c. hee gives them spirits suitable thereto: whom the Lord will reserve for other service, or imploy in other places, hee inclines their hearts rather to fly, giving them an heart suitable to such a condition. It is a case of Conscience frequently put, and oft resolved by holy Bradford, Peter Martyr, Philpot, *and others, in* Queene Maries *bloody dayes, viz. Whether it was lawfull to flee out of the Land: To which their answer was, that if God gave a spirit of courage and willingnesse to glorifie him by sufferings, they should stay; but if they found not such a spirit they might lawfully fly, yea, they advised them thereunto. Those Servants of Christ, though full of the spirit of glory, and of Christ to outface the greatest persecuters in profession of the Truth, unto the death, yet did not complaine of the cowardize of such as fled, because they deserted them and the Cause, but rather advised divers so to doe, and rejoyced when God gave liberty to their brethren to escape with their lives to the places of liberty, to serve the Lord according to his Word. Neither were those faithfull Saints and servants of God uselesse and unprofitable in the Church of God that fled from the bloody Prelates. The infinite and onely wise God hath many workes to doe in the World, and hee doth by his singular Providence give gifts to his Servants, and disposeth them to his Worke as seemeth best to himselfe. If the Lord will have some to beare witnesse by imprisonments, dismembring, &c. wee honour them therein; if hee will have others instrumentall to promote reformation in* England, *wee honor them, and rejoyce in their holy endeavours, praying for a*

bleſsing upon themſelves and labours. And what if God will have his Church and the Kingdome of Chriſt goe up alſo in theſe remote parts of the world, that his Name may bee known to the Heathen, or whatſoever other end hee hath, and to this end will ſend forth a company of weake-hearted Chriſtians, which dare not ſtay at home to ſuffer, why ſhould wee not let the Lord alone, and rejoyce that Chriſt is preached howſoever, and whereſoever? And who can ſay that this work was not undertaken and carryed on with ſincere and right ends, and in an holy ſerious manner, by the chiefe and the body of ſuch as undertooke the ſame? The Lord knows whether the ſincere deſires of worſhipping himſelfe according to his will, of promoting and propagating the Goſpel, was not in the hearts of very many in this enterprife; and hee that ſeeth in ſecret, and rewardeth openly, knows what prayers and teares have been poured out to God by many alone, and in dayes of faſting and prayer of Gods ſervants together, for his counſell, direction, aſsiſtance, bleſsing in this worke: How many longings and pantings of heart have been in many after the Lord Jeſus, to ſee his goings in his Sanctuary, as the one thing their ſoules deſired and requeſted of God, that they might dwell in his houſe for ever; the fruit of which prayers and deſires this liberty of New-England *hath been taken to bee, and thankfully received from God. Yea, how many ſerious conſultations with one another, and with the faithfull Miniſters, and other eminent ſervants of Chriſt, have been taken about this worke, is not unknowne to ſome; which cleares us from any raſh heady ruſhing into this place, out of diſcontent, as many are ready to conceive. Wee will here ſay nothing of the perſons whoſe hearts the Lord ſtirred up in this buſineſſe; ſurely all were not raſh, weake-ſpirited, inconſiderate of what they left behinde, or of what it was to goe into a Wilderneſſe. But if it were well knowne and conſidered, or if wee were able to expreſſe and recount the ſingular workings of*

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divine Providence, for the bringing on of this worke, to what it is come unto, it would stop the mouths of all that have not an heart to accuse and blaspheme the goodnesse of God in his glorious workes: whatever many may say or think, wee beleeve after-times will admire and adore the Lord herein, when all his holy ends, and the wayes he hath used to bring them about shall appeare. Look from one end of the heaven to another, whether the Lord hath assayed to do such a Worke as this in any Nation, so to carry out a people of his owne from so flourishing a State, to a wildernesse so far distant, for such ends, and for such a worke: Yea, and in few yeares hath done for them, as hee hath here done for his poore despised people. When wee looke back and consider what a strange poise of spirit the Lord hath laid upon many of our hearts, wee cannot but wonder at our selves, that so many, and some so weak and tender, with such cheerfulnesse and constant resolutions against so many perswasions of friends, discouragements from the ill reports of this Countrey, the straits, wants, and tryalls of Gods people in it, &c. yet should leave our accommodations and comforts, should forsake our deareſt relations, Parents, brethren, Sisters, Christian friends, and acquaintances, overlooke all the dangers and difficulties of the vast Seas, the thought whereof was a terrour to many, and all this to go to a wildernesse, where wee could forecast nothing but care and temptations, onely in hopes of enjoying Christ in his Ordinances, in the fellowship of his people; was this from a stupid senselesnesse or desperate carelesnesse what became of us or ours? or want of naturall affections to our deare Countrey, or neareſt relations? No surely, with what bowells of compassion to our deare Countrey; with what heart-breaking affections, to our deare relations, and Christian friends many of us at least came away, the Lord is witnesse. What shall we say of the singular Providence of God bringing so many Ship-loads of

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his people, through ſo many dangers, as upon Eagles wings, with ſo much ſafety from yeare to yeare? The fatherly eare of our God in feeding and cloathing ſo many in a Wilderneſſe, giving ſuch healthfulneſſe and great increaſe of poſterity? what ſhall wee ſay of the Worke it ſelfe of the kingdome of Chriſt? and the forme of a Common-wealth erected in a Wilderneſſe, and in ſo few yeares brought to that ſtate, that ſcarce the like can bee ſeen in any of our Engliſh Colonies in the richeſt places of this America, *after many more years ſtanding? That the Lord hath carryed the ſpirits of ſo many of his people through all their toylſome labour, wants, difficulties, loſſes, &c. with ſuch a meaſure of chearfulneſſe and contentation? But above all wee muſt acknowledge the ſingular pity and mercies of our God, that hath done all this and much more for a people ſo unworthy, ſo ſinfull, that by murmurings of many, unfaithfulneſſe in promiſes, oppreſſions, and other evils which are found among us, have ſo diſhonoured his Majeſty, expoſed his worke here to much ſcandall and obloquie, for which wee have cauſe for ever to bee aſhamed, that the Lord ſhould yet owne us, and rather correct us in mercy, then caſt us off in diſpleaſure, and ſcatter us in this Wilderneſſe, which gives us cauſe with* Mich. 7. *to ſay,* Who is a God like our God, that pardoneth iniquities, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſions of the remnant of his heritage; even becauſe he delighteth in mercy? *Though we be a people of many weakneſſes and wants, yet wee acknowledge our God to have been to us a God of many mercies, in reſpect of that ſweet peace which he hath taken away from ſo many Nations, yet continuing the ſame to us; in reſpect alſo of that liberty wee have in Gods houſe, the bleſſed Miniſtery of the Word, the ſweet unity and communion of Gods Churches and Miniſters, increaſe and multiplication of Churches, Chriſtian government in the Common-wealth, and many other mercies wee enjoy, but eſpecially the gracious preſence*

ſence of Chriſt to many of our ſoules in all theſe. But wee will not inſiſt much upon this ſubject, being perſwaded it is in the conſciences and hearts of many of our dear Countrey-men to thinke that we ſhould be an object of love and tenderneſſe to that State and people, by whoſe Laws and unkind uſages we were driven out into a wilderneſſe, rather then to bee judged as deſerters of our Brethren, and the Cauſe of Chriſt in hand: with whom (excuſe us if we now ſpeak plainly) it had been far more eaſie unto many of us to have ſuffered, then to have adventured hither upon the wilderneſſe ſorrows wee expected to have met withall; though we muſt confeſſe the Lord hath ſweetned it beyond our thoughts, and utmoſt expectations of prudent men.

But paſſing by this wee muſt deſire the Reader to beare with us a little in removing that apprehenſion that wee are the great ſtumbling block in the way of Reformation, which (if it were true) it had been better we had been driven ſo farre into this wilderneſſe, as never to have been heard of more.

Concerning our affection to this bleſſed worke of a publique Reformation, of the Nation in generall, and the particular Churches or Congregations of the Land in particular, (as it is beſt knowne to God) ſo wee thinke it is not unknowne to men, not onely here by our daily prayers for it, and ſometime ſolemne ſeekings of God about it; but alſo we have given ſome teſtimonies thereof both by private Letters, and the publique motions of ſome of Gods eminent ſervants among us tending that way.

We conceive two things ſpecially in our Doctrine and practiſe, that may ſeem to bee ſtumbling blocks in the way of this publique Reformation, which we ſhall here remove.

The firſt is our practiſe wherein wee ſeem ſo much to differ from the reformed Churches, in receiving to our Churches onely viſible Saints and beleevers.

This we doe freely confeſſe that our practiſe and judgement

doe evidence this to all, that we thinke reformation of the Church doth not onely consist in purging out corrupt Worship, and setting up the true; but also in purging the Churches from such prophaneness and sinfulnesse as is scandalous to the Gospel, and makes the Lord weary of his owne Ordinances, Esay 1.

And wee doubt not but this was in the hearts of many, (if not most) of Gods servants, to desire a separation of the precious from the vile, in the dispensing of Gods ordinances, and if the charity of some be of larger extent herein then others, this hinders not agreement in the maine.

This day hath discovered what kinde of people are to bee found every where in the Parishes of England: Can light and darkenesse, Christ and Belial agree together? Popish episcopall enemies and haters of all godlinesse and reformation, cleave together in one Church of Christ, with the Saints of God?

Yet neither our Doctrine nor practise do prescribe and limit the way of attaining this reformation, whereby any should justly from our example stand off from concurring in such a publique worke.

It is true, where there is no Church relation, but a people are to begin a new constituting of Churches, reformation is to be sought in the first Constitution. This is our case. But where corrupted Churches, (such as we conceive the Congregations of England generally to be) are to be reformed, there we conceive that such Congregations should bee called by able Ministers unto repentance for former evills, and confessing and bewayling their sins, renew a solemn Covenant with God to reform themselves, and to submit unto the discipline of Christ. By which meanes such as refuse so to doe, exclude themselves, and others by the severity of Discipline should bee purged out, if falling into sinne they remaine impenitent in the same.

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What ſome particular perſons may have ſaid or done contrary to this our profeſsion, wee cannot ſay, nor doe we juſtifie, but wee know nothing that hath come from us to the contrary, to weaken the hands of godly reformers, or to perſwade the people to ſeparate from the Congregations, if by any meanes they might attaine (with toleration of what can be) the reformation thereof, with the liberty of Gods true worſhip therein. If indeed that cannot bee obtained, but men contradict and blaſpheme them, as Paul *ſeparated the Diſciples, ſo wee ſee no other remedy the faithfull have in ſuch a caſe.*

The ſecond ſtumbling block may be our Doctrine and practiſe about Church-Government, when wee give Diſcipline as well as other Ordinances to particular Churches, not ſubjecting them to any Government out of themſelves; but onely to take the brotherly counſell and helpe one of another.

But how this ſhould hinder a generall Reformation we ſee not, for if every Church ſo reforme themſelves (as is aforeſaid) and have ſuch Officers over them as the rule of the New Teſtament requires, 1 Tim. 3. Tit. 2. *wee need not feare to betruſt the Church (having ſuch Officers) with that power which we conceive Chriſt hath given to the ſame, other Churches watching over them, counſelling and admoniſhing them in the Lord.*

But if there be not ſuch a reformation of the Churches, nor ſuch guides ſet over them, the power of the keyes in a Presbytery of ſuch Paſtors as may not be according to the rule, may as much abuſe them as a particular Church may doe, and it may be to the hurt of many who would uſe them better, in their own Congregations, then they can in a Claſsis, being over-voted there.

And we cannot conceive but both the care of reforming the matter of a Church, and the recalling of the power of government to the Church, tends much to further this worke

of reformation, no way to hinder the ſame.

And if wee might obtaine that of our deare Brethren, which wee humbly crave, viz. *That our Doctrine and practiſe might be taken candidly according to our plaine meaning, and declarations, and not repreſented unto the World under ſuch ſhapes and formes as make it ſeeme rigid (all one with the moſt rigid Separatiſts, Donatiſts, Arminians, Socinians, &c.) we ſhould hope that we ſhall goe for lovers and friends to a godly and generall Reformation, not for diſturbers of the ſame; but the contrary dealing we meet with too too oft through the miſtakes of Brethren; This learned Author* (*Mr.* Ball, *though in the Epiſtle he deſired us to reſt aſſured, that although he had conceived ſuch thoughts of us as leaning to ſeparation, yet he would gladly receive every ſyllable from us that ſhould diſlodge ſuch thoughts, yet againſt our plaine profeſſion ſometime he will needs faſten the opinion of ſeparation upon us, and very frequently ſets Mr.* Robinſon *in a parallel with our opinions,* (*as if we generally went that way in thoſe things*) *which are well known to be the Doctrine of many of our godly and beſt reformers.*

The Learned may plainly ſee, how eaſie it had been for us and upon better grounds to have filled our margents with quotations out of Papiſts and Prelates as parallel with many paſſages of this Reply, but we have purpoſely abſtained from ſo doing, that we might not caſt any blur or provoke the ſpirits of brethren.

And ſeeing we are inforced to wipe off ſuch aſperſions, we humbly deſire our beloved Brethren (whoſe learned labours wee honour) to beare with us if we lightly touch this ſore, for wee confeſſe it brings bluſhing into our faces, and ſadneſſe to our hearts, to read ſo often ſuch harſh imputations caſt upon us, which we cannot conceive but (falling from ſuch pens) they breed a ſtrange loathing of us in the ſtomachs of many that read bookes without ſerious examinations thereof.

Firſt,

First, how oft doe wee meet with that imputation, that wee make none members of a visible Church but such as are really saints and beleevers, contrary to our frequent profession, That visible saints that are such in judgement of charity are fit matter of the Church?

Secondly, that we make a vocall Church Oath or Covenant, the essentiall forme of a Church, when as wee frequently acknowledge that this Covenant which constituteth a Church, is either implicite or explicite, and that Congregations in England *are truly Churches having an implicite covenant: and it is far from our practise to use any Oath in our Covenant, and strange to us to read so many Pages against our Church Oath, and swearing to a Covenant, to make our courses horrid and too too rigorous.*

Thirdly, that we set up a popular government, making the Elders of the Church no more but moderators, &c. and that Ministers receive their power from the people, are their servants, and administer in their name, (as Mr. Ball *and others object) when we oft professe the contrary, that all authority (properly so called) is in the hands of the Elders, and the liberty of the people is to bee carryed in a way of subjection, and obedience to them in the Lord: neither doth it follow from any Doctrine of ours, no more then from the ordination of Pastors by the Presbytery, that they are their servants, &c.*

Fourthly, that if a Congregation reject a Pastor for no fault, *they take both* nomen & esse, *the name and nature of a Pastor from him. For this the Reader is referred to our Answer of the twenty fift Question of the thirty two questions sent unto us., where nothing at all is said, but reference is made to our answer to the nine questions, amongst which the seventh being of this very point, our answer is quite contrary to what is imputed to us. Our words are these,* Concerning the Minister himselfe thus deposed, &c. we conceive though hee bee by them deprived of the execution

of his Miniſtery amongſt them, yet untill hee accept of a call to another people, hee ſtill remaine a Miniſter of Chriſt; in whoſe account hee hath true right of adminiſtration among the people. *Now if hee remaine a Miniſter of Chriſt, and have true right to adminiſter, let any judge whether wee take away* nomen *or eſſe; or that wee make Church cenſures worke* ex opere operato, clave errante, *as is alſo imputed to us. Many ſuch miſtakes we finde, but let theſe ſuffice to informe the Reader how wary hee had need bee in receiving ſuch reports againſt brethren: and this charity wee have cauſe the more earneſtly to crave of all, that they would reſerve one eare to heare what their poore out-caſt brethren can ſay for themſelves, becauſe wee are placed at ſuch a diſtance and diſadvantage, that oft-times it is not poſſible for us to take notice of ſuch objections, and return an anſwer under a yeare or almoſt two years, whereby Satan hath a marvailous advantage to work ſtrange thoughts and diſtaſtefull affections towards us, and faſten them ſo deeply that hardly they will bee taken off again. But thus it falleth out too too frequently, that when Brethren, otherwiſe deare to each other, differ in their judgements, and breake out to open contention about the ſame, they are very apt to make the opinions of the contrary party as unpleaſing and abſurd to the judgement of others, as may bee, whence griefe, offence, and alienations of affections (through the ſubtility of Satan, and the corruption of our hearts) are ready to follow. And this makes us both fearfull of our ſelves, leſt wee ſhould give way to any unloving thoughts towards the deare ſervants of Chriſt, or returne any offenſive language unto them; yea, this cauſeth us oft to bewaile that, which can never bee enough lamented, the ſad diſtances and ſharpe contentions between ſuch neare brethren, whom the Lord hath ſo conjoyned in the ſame Cauſe of Reformation. And oh that our deare brethren would beare with us*

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a little here, and give no leave to poure out our humble and affectionate requests and expostulations into their bosomes! Wee would bee very loath to impute any thing to our deare Country and beloved brethren that is not evident, or to rip up private failings, and make them publique: but when Pulpits and Presses proclaime to the world not onely the distances in judgement, but also alienation of affections, when there is such straining to make the contrary tenents as odious to the world as may bee, such inlarging of differences, as if the wounds could never bee healed; such gall and vineger poured on, in stead of the salt of savoury speeches, and the oyle of smooth and soft words to calm and pacifie spirits already provoked; yea, when there want not some that seeke all private Letters they can gather up, and search every corner to discover and publish to the world the seeming failings of brethren; when contentions are grown to that passe, that such orthodox, learned, and godly brethren whose faithfull labours in the Lords worke, and great service and use they may be of in time to come, might worthily plead for a roome in the bosomes and inmost affections of their brethren, are cryed out against as not to bee indured in the Country, because of some difference in some points of discipline: when these things are so, who that have any sense of Gods dishonour, or true love to his Countreys good, can forbeare from teares, or hold his peace, that have any opportunity to utter his griefe? Wee will not take upon us to say who began this fray, or who have most transgressed the rules of charity and modestie. The Lord give every man an heart that hath failed to bee affected with their owne, and ready to pity and pardon one anothers weaknesses: neither doe wee hereby blame loving and candid debating of differences to finde out the truth; but give us leave to say thus much to all, (for our hearts and soules are with all the faithfull servants of Christ) that desire according to

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their light to promote the kingdome of Christ Jesus, what ever their distance of judgement from us may be) What, deare brethren, is there no balme in Gilead, no Physitian to heale this wound: alasse, how is it now so wide and deep, that at the first was presented to the world so small, or scarce any at all? When the Prelates petitioned for their government, because the Reformers were not, nor could ever agree upon one Forme: it was professed that in six Points (whereof seme are now the greatest bones of contention) all did agree, and doubted not but if the Prelates were downe, all would agree in one. And was this bare words to put off the Prelaticall petition? or did the Author speake without ground at adventures? God forbid wee should thinke so, but what the common adversary will think and speak, it would grieve a godly heart to consider. How comes it then to passe the breach is growne so great? It rejoyced our hearts to see that ingenuous, Christian and peaceable disposition in that ever honoured brother Mr. Herle, who brought the distance in his Preface to such a narrow, as if one plaster more might seeme to have healed it; oh that there had been many more of that peace-making spirit! what heart-burnings and contentions had been prevented. Wee thought also that meeke Apologetick Narration gave a faire opportunity of closing with brethren in such things as they professed to concur in, but what contrary entertainment it found, wee lament to consider. And is it now come to this passe, that these who were in a manner one cannot live together in the same kingdome? Oh the depth of the malice and subtilty of that old Serpent! Oh the policy and undermining faculty of the Jesuiticall generation, (who no doubt have a great influence in this division!) Oh the frailties of flesh and blood in Gods deerest Saints! Oh the unsearchable depths of the Lords eternall counsels, that for holy ends leaves his owne to such temptations, and yet knows how, and will assuredly improve all this

this to his owne glory, and the lifting up of the name and kingdome of Christ in despite of all the gates of hell, and give his servants once a season to sing together this song of Moses and of the Lambe in triumph over all their enemies. But what? is the cause past helpe and remedy? shall we think, alasse, there is no hope, they will not leave untill they have devoured each other, better for us to say nothing, wee shall bee but censured and slighted of all? God forbid, have wee ventured thus farre, and shall wee not presume a little further? Oh that we were worthy and fit to propound any thing that might tend to mollifie this sore: Or that the Lord himselfe would speake by such poore creatures any word in season to helpe (at least a little) in this sad case! We will not, deare Brethren, make this long Epistle more tedious by presenting unto you all that might be said to move and perswade your hearts to study peace and unity, and with one shoulder to set your selves to further this blessed worke of publique Reformation, for which the Lord hath put such an opportunity into your hands, as never was the like, and God knows, whether ever it will bee, if this bee slipped. Wee are perswaded, when the heate of contention is laid aside, the blessed Spirit of Christ in you doth secretly suggest arguments enough unto your hearts. Doe you not oft heare such whisperings as these. Are they not Brethren who differ from us? hath not the Lord received them? doe they not stand or fall to their own Master, and how shall wee reject or judge them? have we not our ignorances and frailties? what, is there no consolation in Christ, no comfort of love, no fellowship of the spirit? or if so, should not this perswade us to bee of one minde in the Lord? doe wee not hope to live in heaven together, and shall wee stand at such distances here? shall wee thus suffer peace to goe from us, and not follow and pursue it? shall we lose the blessing of peace-makers? shall wee by such differences, thus gratifie Satan, Jesuites, Prelates, &c. and strengthen

their hands by weakening our owne? are we not in the high-way to devoure each other, and expose all to ruine? is it not high time for us that are one in the Orthodox truth, to joyne heart and hand to pray, and preach, and write as one, to stop the flood-gate of errours and abominations that Satan hath set open to the drowning of many soules, and the hazard of many of the sheep of Christ, whiles wee are contending about some matters of order which though they bee of moment, yet must give way unto more fundamentall truths; and oh that this mischief were sufficiently laid to heart, and the dangerous spreadings of such gangrenes looked to in season! What will not all our vowes, covenants and solemne Oaths binde us together? These and many such heart-breaking considerations wee doubt not are before your eyes daily, which therefore wee will not inlarge. Onely give us leave to propound what we conceive in our weake judgement might somewhat tend to heale this distance. Wee confesse wee stand farre from the marke, and may misse the matter, but if we doe, let our well-meaning bee accepted, and our weakneſſe pardoned.

Two things, as we touched before, we conceive keep our deare brethren from closing together in one to promote the publique and generall Reformation.

First, that point of Reformation which concernes the members of the Churches, and here wee feare the distance at present is great. For when it's thought, on the one hand, that there is no need of sending godly Preachers to the ignorant and prophane Parishes to instruct them, humble them, and prepare them for a gracious Reformation, but that Pastors (if they could bee found) should bee sent to them, and minister to them as they are, if they will but joyne in the nationall Covenant, as most have done, (for we see no other required) and when godly Pastors may not have power to try their people whether they can examine themselves, discerne the Lords body, and walke according to Christ, before they

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admit them to the Lords Table, nor may exclude them but upon some scandalous evill, which seemes short of that which even the Common-prayer-booke did allow. Considering in what a state multitude of Parishes are in England, how full of Malignants, Atheists, prophane Wretches, &c. wee must needs acknowledge it will bee very hard for the godly to satisfie their consciences in such Church-communion, or godly Pastors to minister unto their Parishes in such a state, and therefore wee cannot wholly condemn such Ministers and people as have been gathered into congregations if there were no hope of remedy in this case.

Secondly, on the other hand, when some shall gather out of many Congregations the most godly and able Christians into severed Churches, wee must acknowledge it may occasion grief to the Ministers of such Congregations. But is there no middle way wherein according to God these two might meet? wee suppose there is. If the Lord would vouchsafe to help his people in these few things.

1 Is it not possible to obtaine of that ever Renowned Parliament, not onely such liberty for godly Pastors, and their Churches to debarre from the Lords Table such as are not qualified according to the former description of the Reverend Assembly, but also all favour and furtherance from Authority to purge out of the Church all such according to rule, that live impenitently in any known sinne and scandalous evill? we cannot doubt but that if brethren would agree with one heart to petition the same, such as have done so worthily many things for purging the House of God, would also promote this needfull point of Reformation.

2 If all the godly Ministers would joyne as one man, and take unto them the Zeale of John Bap. thundering out the direfull wrath of God against the pride, vanity, luxury, prophaneneſſe, and late swarmes of monstrous errors, (the usuall fures accompanying Reformation) and other sinnes of

the time, to lay all levell before the Lord; and with holy Calvin, *resolve to suffer their hands to bee cut off rather, then to deliver that holy seale of grace to the openly wicked and impenitent sinner; how would the Lord goe out with his servants, and cut downe sin by the sharpe sword of his Word, and severity of Discipline, if all joyned together? Whereas we feare sin and prophaneesse will out-stare all godly Pastors, when they stand so much divided.*

Vid. Pet. Mart. Loc. Com. de Excom.

3 *If these things being obtained and agreed, all godly Ministers and Christians, which are the salt of the earth, and might by the blessing of God season the Congregations wherein they live, they would not cast them off, or withdraw from them, till first by publike and private admonitions and exhortations they had convinced them of sin, and sought by all good meanes their reformation.*

Whereby some no doubt might be gained, and what a blessed worke were that? And as for others that prove obstinate and impenitent, there would bee just cause of rejecting them from the ordinances and society of the Church; or if this part of the kingdom of Christ would not be born in Congregations, with how much peace and satisfaction to their owne soules, and to the consciences of all, should such godly Ministers and people withdraw themselves from them, to a nearer communion one with another?

And shall wee not hope that England *is capable of such a Reformation as this, if Gods faithfull Ministers would with one heart and mind endeavour the same? Farre, farre be it from our deare Countrey, after all those notable steps unto Reformation, that it should stick in this, which is the life of all the rest. But if it should bee so, that either the great ones should bee too big to stoope downe to the Lord Jesus in the wayes of his wholsome Discipline, or the multitude so carnall, worldly, wilfull, prophane, impenitent, as not to reforme themselves, families, and so their congrega-*

tions,

tions, humbly ſubmitting to the rule of Chriſt; or if the Miniſters (at leaſt, moſt of them) ſhould looke at preferment, honour, credit, riches, authority over the people, and not minde ſuch a work as this is. And this, after all the heavy, humbling, dreadfull judgements of God come upon the Land; after all the glorious out-breakings of the light of the Goſpel in many parts of the Kingdome, after all the proteſtations, covenants, oaths, whereby ſo many have bound themſelves to this particular reformation of themſelves, and to further the reformation of the Publique; wee tremble to ſpeake it, but our hearts cannot but feare it, that woe, woe, woe will bee to poore ſinfull England. *It ſeemes to us to bee a prophetieall ſpeech of Mr.* Brinſly, *long ſince at reſt with God, when lamenting the prophanenesse of* England, *with their connivence at Popery, and complyance with the wicked, he ſaith,* That if the Lord of Hoſts doe call for them, *(meaning the Popiſh faction)* to riſe up againſt us in new conſpiracies, or open violence, and with them all the crew of wicked and ungodly men, in whom we have ſo delighted, to take part with thoſe to our deſtruction, (as they, it is to bee feared, will be as outragious as the other againſt all ſoundly fearing God) is it not juſt? yea if hee ſhould let them make it *bellum prodigorum*, the day of all the ſpend-thrifts, and of all the vile perſons of the Land, to have their fingers in every mans coffers, and their hands waſhed in the blood of them, whom they have hated, ſo ſoon as ever any of the Babyloniſh deſignes ſhall take their effect, could wee wonder at it? *And is not this fulfilled in theſe times? which wee wiſh may well bee laid to heart.*

Brinſ. Watch, part 3. cap. 10.

The ſecond thing which wee conceive may chiefly hinder this cloſing, is that point of Church government, which concernes the power and liberties of particular Churches or Congregations, and here wee muſt acknowledge the diſtance is

the great. For on the one side, we cannot see either by Treatises, or by the Directory for Worship, that Congregations are acknowledged to bee compleat Churches, especially standing among other Churches, or that any power or liberty is given to them to administer Church-censures, no not so long as they administer rightly according to the rule; but all such power is taken indeed from the Churches, though in words they are perswaded that it is to strengthen them, and if this also come down from the Catholick Church, and so to lesser Synods, the greater part having power over the lesse, as it were jure divino, it will strike home at the liberties and power of particular Churches. But what here to say of the distance on the other hand, wee cannot tell, wee see or read nothing, but that our deare and honoured Brethren doe freely imbrace communion of Churches in consultative Synods, for the brotherly helpe of each other, and the weaker Churches; yea, and in a doctrinall way to declare the will of Christ, and to threaten his judgements against such as shall refuse wholsome counsell, and withdraw communion from such as wilfully refuse to heare what is propounded according to the minde of Christ.

And what should we here say? but on the bended knees of our soules intreat our reverend Brethren to consider what power any or many Churches can challenge over another, to require them to give up their right to them, to rule in common, if a fifter Church furnished with Officers shall refuse the same; or what rule bindeth the Churches of an hundred, or any such civill division to come into such a combination with those Churches, rather then others; if that refusing, Churches have just reasons to object against such Churches, or their Officers. We think the more voluntary and free such consociations are, the better. Here we shall be bold to propound this one thing, viz. why may not the fifth and sixth Articles of agreement publikely professed to the world, in answer to the Prelaticall petition, obtaine amongst our Brethren, that it may appeare to the disappointment

of theire hopes, that the Prelates being downe, the agreement would be easie, as is there said, Viz.

Ar. 5. *Each particular Church hath her owne power and authority, and the use and benefit of all the ordinances of Christ, neither is there any thing to be done without the expresse or tacit consent of the Congregation, in matters which are proper and peculiar to a particular Church, whether in election or ordination of Ministers, or in admitting or excommunicating of members.*

Ar. 6. *It is in many respects expedient both for the members of each Church, whether Ministers or people and for the right governing and well-being of the particular Churches, in a Nation professing Christian Religion, that besides their particular Assemblies and Elderships, they meet by their Commissioners, Ministers, and Elders in greater Assemblies, that matters that concern all the Churches within their bounds respective may with common advice and consent be agreed upon for their good and edification.*

And we hope the Lord may yet have such a mercy for England, *if the crying sins thereof bee not still impenitently against this glorious shining light of the Gospel, persisted in, which wee confesse is our greatest feare. Godly Brethren wee hope would agree, if* Englands *sins hinder not. We confesse it was the saddest newes that this yeare came unto our eares, that the Kingdome of Christ is hardly like to obtaine so much jealousie there is, lest the discipline of Christ should crosse the licentiousnesse of this age; yea, that generally there is no more regard of the solemn Covenant, especially in personall reformation, then if it were never made, that many reject the reformations they seemed to desire at the first. These with other sad things come to our eares, which sadden our spirits. Oh* England! England! *our beloved* England! *will thou not be made cleane? when will it once bee? will thou still return the Lord Jesus, (graciously striving with thee for to save thee)*

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ſuch an unkind anſwer, We will not have this man reigne over us? haſt thou not yet learned ſo much wiſdom, as to kiſſe the ſon, no not now when he is angry and the ſword in his hand? That voice of God ſoundeth oft in our eares, when wee thinke of England, Put off thine ornaments, that I may know what to doe unto thee; *but for ought we heare, the pride of* England *did never ſo much teſtifie to their faces as now, when ſackcloth and aſhes were more ſuitable. The Lord humble the hearts of our deare Countrey-men, or elſe wee feare the yoake of Chriſt will never be born, and how the Lord Jeſus will beare and indure that, we tremble to think.*

But what doe we thus to take upon us, and let looſe our Pen ſo far? pardon, we beſeech you, Chriſtian Reader, this ſeeming boldneſſe, it is our hearty affection to the peace and proſperity of our deare Countrey, and the Saints of God in it, that have drawn theſe things from us. Say not, what calling have theſe thus to admoniſh and cenſure us? Cenſure we doe not, (that we would doe onely to our ſelves) but faithfully to admoniſh and exhort in the Lord, we hope we may preſume. Neither have we taken upon us this whole weighty worke, of our owne minds, but at the reqweſt and call of divers our reverend Brethren, whoſe voice herein we looked upon as the voice of God, nor have wee accepted that call, out of any luſt we have to contend, or enter the liſts of diſputation with any. Wee love the peace of the Churches, and unity and concord with all our deare and godly Brethren too well, to have any ſuch ends. And though wee are not unwilling to receive and conſider any returne that may bee made, and we hope with a mind to ſubmit to the truth, yet wee muſt profeſſe Two things chiefly inclined us to undertake this worke. Firſt, to cleare up ſuch truths as we conceive to bee according to the minde of Chriſt, which were obſcured by this Reply. Secondly, (and that eſpecially) hoping that what wee ſhould write, would tend rather to a peaceable healing of offences and differences, then otherwiſe; and therefore have preſumed

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to Preface thus farre, and so to present these our affectionate requests to our deare Brethren, and Country-men, which wee heartily recommend to their serious consideration, and to the blessing of God, who onely can incline the hearts of men, to attend to any thing of God set before them; though wee bee the meanest and weakest of many, to take upon us, thus to speake to our deare Country-men, yet through the grace of Christ who put us into the Ministery, we have bestowed a great part of our labour in these parts, neither (we hope) altogether in vaine; which makes us somewhat the more engaged and encouraged to write as we doe. And now having thus farre in this Epistle, and in the Booke following, testified our love to the truth, and desires of the peace, unity, reformation, and prosperity of our beloved England, *and the Churches of God therein, wee commend both to the consideration of the Reader, and all to the grace and blessing of Christ Jesus, and rest.*

From New-England,
Novemb. 28. 1645.

THO. ALLIN,

THO. SHEPARD.

ADVERTISEMENTS TO THE READER.

TO the Epiſtle of the Author of this Reply wee ſay nothing, becauſe it ſavours (for the moſt part) of love and deſire of unity, which we thankfully acknowledge; onely we cannot but take notice of two paſſages.

A complaint, made againſt ſome ſtanding affected New-England *ward, who have carryed it ſo, as if a chiefe part of holineſſe conſiſted in ſeparation, and that therefore ſome have ſeparated from all private and publique communion there; others from all publique, but not from private; others from the Sacraments onely, allowing publique communion otherwiſe.*

To which wee anſwer, that as the Church fell by degrees into univerſall pollution, by the Apoſtacy foretold to bee under the Man of Sin; ſo by degrees it recovers it out of it againe: If therefore ſeparation reach no farther then ſeparation from ſinnes, and ſuch ſinnes of Churches wherein our ſelves in joyning with them muſt bee involved, wee ſuppoſe ſuch ſeparation

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(all due respect and love reserved and professed to the Churches themselves) cannot justly bee accounted unwarrantable; and 'tis the profession of the Author in his Epistle, to plead for communion with the Churches of Christ, no farther then they hold communion with Christ: If any transgresse these bounds, either in respect of private or publique communion in *England*, wee must professe openly, that if any mourn for it, wee are (or would bee) companions with them in that griefe. Whose heart bleeds not to see Gods flock scattered, and needlesse rents made? that scarce Truth or errour can now adayes bee received, but it is maintained in a way of Schisme, directly contrary to the gathering and uniting Spirit of Jesus Christ: A wide Conscience calls evill, good, and therefore can communicate with any evill; a strait Conscience cals good, evill, (as *Gerson* observes) and therefore can readily separate even from that which is good. When rash and sudden men are grown masters of their Consciences, it troubles not them from whom they divide, nor whither they run in separate wayes, when weak (yet godly men) are under the tendernesse, (yet much darknesse) of Conscience, being very timorous of wayes that are evill, grow many times shy (at least in simplicity are led) from wayes that afterward are found to be lawfull and good. 'Tis the usuall misery of *English* spirits, either to spin the Spiders web, and swallow down all corruptions in Churches; or so to breake downe the gap in forsaking corruptions utterly to abandon the Churches themselves: The wine of causelesse separation hath a spirit in it, (if God graciously prevent not) that hurries men headlong to strange distances, that in separating from publique, they separate from private; in separating from corrupt Churches (as no Churches)

they ſeparate from the pureſt, even thoſe of their own, in ſeparating from pollutions of Gods ordinances, at laſt they fall to the ſtorming of ſome, if not to the utter renouncing of all the Ordinances themſelves: we mourne (wee ſay) for ſuch evills, and could with bended knees deſire our deare Countrey-men to conſider, whether this bee the Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus that ſo carries them; to reject them whom the Lord Jeſus hath not yet wholly forſaken; and not rather with one heart, and with bowells of compaſſion (if any liberty can bee procured) to ſtudy how to heale the bleeding breaches, and manifold evills of ſick and ſinfull *England*, that in their owne recovery from pollutions, the whole may ariſe and ſhare alike with them therein; tolerating with all long-ſuffering many things amiſſe, & mourning daily after the Lord, till ſuch times come wherein he wil give his people his ordinances, not only in purity, but alſo in power; when the Lord ſhall be one, and his name one, *Zach.* 14. 9. over all the earth. As for our ſelves, wee look not upon our departure to theſe parts to be a ſeparation (rigidly taken) but a lawfull receſſion, or a heavenly tranſlation from corrupt to more pure Churches, by the hand of our God; and how far we allow of ſeparation, the enſuing Treatiſe will declare.

2 *The ſecond is, That we diſſent one from another as much as others from us, and perhaps the leſſer part of us.*

Anſw. We confeſſe we know but little, and that but in part, and therefore if we ſhould ſay, that in ſome things we did not diſſent, we ſhould not ſpeak the truth, nor ſay that we were ſinfull men; yet this we muſt ſpeak to his praiſe whoſe we are, and whom we ſerve with our ſpirits in the Goſpel of his Son; that although Satan hath been oft buſie to make breaches among us, yet the Miniſters of Chriſt have been hitherto generally (if not all) of one

heart

heart and mind in the maine and principall things of his Kingdom amongst us: and (which is observed by many) where ever differences are sown, yet the Ministers never disagree: and that although some differences have and doe arise before their convening together, yet they never yet met, but grace hath over-wrestled corruption, peace, trouble, and truth, errour, and so have most sweetly accorded in one, the thoughts of which Christ-like peaceableness of spirit and love, as it oft sweetens many other sorrows, so we desire to bee spared herein, and that this our crowne may not bee taken from us by such passages, (suggesting great differences) as these bee.

Now for the Reply it self, we desire the Reader to consider, that we had neither time, nor Bookes readily at hand to consider some of the quotations made in the margent, and therfore being such testimonies as cast not the ballance one way or another, we have passed most of them by with silence.

It had also been easie for us to have Analysed more orderly the words of the Reply, then as they are set downe; but (because we would not doe the least wrong) we have set them down as we finde them in the Book; not every passage (for that were needlesse) but those things wherein there seemes to bee any observable matter of dispute between us; nor are we conscious of doing the Author the least wrong in setting down his own words, as hereafter you find them.

We confesse, that in sundry of our Answers, we have studied not onely to answer to the Reply, but have taken in what sundry others godly learned object against our principles, but without mentioning (scarce any time) their Names, of which we are sparing for no other reason, but because we honour the men from our very hearts, and could wish (though differently minded from us in

some things) as *Melanchthon* did in another the like case, to live and die in their bosomes. The name of this servant of Christ now asleep, is an oyntment poured out and precious to us; we could therefore have wisht it our portion to have answered the Booke without the least reflecting upon him, but the necessity herein is unavoydable. This onely we adde, that whatever weaknesses may passe from us, let them not bee imputed to those servants of Christ, that set us on work, and have wanted leisure to review what is here done; Every one may not bee in all things of the same mind with us, for they may meet us in the same end, though they use not the same arguments, or become followers of us in the same path; yet we know wee are not alone in any thing, but may safely say thus much, that what is here defended, is generally acknowledged and received in these Churches of Christ.

A DEFENCE OF THE NINE POSITIONS.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the Title.

WHereas it is called a new Church-way; wee little expected that Brethren studious of Reformation, who have been so exercised with imputations of novelty, would have so readily, and in the frontispice cast the same upon us, who with them desire to walk in the first wayes of our Lord Jesus Christ and his holy Apostles; but as in most substantiall points of Church-order, wee goe along with the best reformed Churches, so wee doubt not to make to good that wherein wee (pressing after further Reformation) seeme to differ from them; yet wee build upon Scripture grounds acknowledged by many godly and Learned Reformers, in our English and other reformed Churches: which, if the Lord have in mercy given us further light, (or rather opportunity to practise) then they had, let it not bee imputed to us for novelty.

A new edition of the old Church-way of godly Reformers, in some things perhaps corrected and amended, is no new Church-

Church-way; or if it be thought the mending of some crooks in the old way make a new way, wee answer with *Junius* in a case not unlike; *Utcunque novam esse videatur, etiamsi quæcunque sint vetera, fuerunt nova; ac non propterea novitatis nomine vitiosa, nisi forte novam pro renovatâ & restitutâ accipiat; quo sensu novam esse hanc viam agnoscimus.*

Jun. lib. 1. paral. 6.

One thing more in the Title page the Reader is to take notice of, that whereas it is said, *This Treatise of Mr.* Ball *was penned a little before his death, and sent over 1637. it seemes to bee a mistake of the Printer*; for the Nine Questions themselves were sent over 1636, the answer returned 38, but miscarrying, another was sent 39. from which time wee longingly expected a return, but partly for the reason rendred in the Epistle, and what else wee know not, wee never in so many yeares received any, till this printed Reply by a Friends meanes came occasionally to our hands, 1644.

Concerning the Epistle to the Reader.

Whereas the publishers of this Treatise impute unto us, or some related to our Cause, *That we are the* Volunteers, *such as cry up this way, and forward to blow such things abroad in the world, which pressed them to make this Controversie publique.*

1 Wee may truly professe before the world, that our Epistle sent with our former Answer, proceeded from a spirit of love and peace, with an humble willingnesse to receive further light by the holy and just Animadversions of our reverend and beloved Brethren, which wee earnestly expected as men [illegible] after the truth.

2 That wee were altogether ignorant of the printing of that our Answer; and in that it was published then, was not without our utter dislike; wee have neither sounded trumpet, nor struck up drum to any (if any such) volunteers, wee heartily grieve that there are any differences between Brethren, much more that they should bee published; most of all, if before they bee privately debated, and brought to some head by mutual consent, are thought fit to be sent out to publique considerations.

3 For our Brethren in *England*, we know no reason to question the truth of that Apology of our Brother, Mr. *Thomas Weld*, in his answer to *W. R. pag.* 2. *Obj.* 3. *Answ.* 1. where he professeth in the name of himselfe and others of our way, a lothnesse to appeare

peare in the case, and that although they had Bookes of this subject ready for the Presse, yet by joint consent they suppressed them, (happily to the detriment of the Cause) being unwilling to blow a fire; and whether they appeared in Pulpit or Presse without instigation, and how sparingly, hee appeales to all the godly to judge.

4 Lastly, wee desire our Brethren to consider the date of Mr. *Ball* his Booke printed for stinted Liturgies, (one chiefe part of this controversie) and the Printed answer to the Nine questions, and let that resolve the question, who of us came first Volunteers into the field; and if any through weakenesse, or zeale without knowledge, have been too clamorous to cry up *New-England* way, with reproach to others; wee desire the world to take notice, that they have neither patent nor patterne from us so to doe, who came not hither proudly to censure others, but to reforme our owne.

CHAP. II.

Qu. 1. *That a stinted Forme of Prayer and set Liturgie is unlawfull.*

THis Position cannot beare that meaning which you give it, if you take it according to our minds, and the plaine construction of the words. We never questioned why you made not use of a Liturgie, &c. *Reply.*

Let our Answer bee viewed, and it will appeare that wee had just cause to premise those distinctions of Formes of Prayer into private and publike; and publike into such as are imposed by others, or composed and used by Ministers themselves before their Sermons; otherwise we must have involved such in the Position, as wee doe not condemn. Now if your generall *thesis* justly admit such limitation to publike imposed Formes, where shall wee finde any set stinted imposed Liturgies, but in Churches of the Papacy or Prelacy? no Reformed Churches stinting or imposing their Formes of Prayer, but leaving Ministers and people at much liberty. Onely the *English* Liturgy therefore is such, according to the plaine construction of the words. *Answ.*

2 Concerning your minds in the Position, wee deny not but you might intend to draw from us an approbation of stinted Li-

turgies in generall, that ſo you might have to ſtay the ſeparation of people from your Liturgy, whereof you complaine: but by that it appeares plainly, what your chiefe ſcope and ayme was in the Poſition: according unto which wee thought it moſt ſafe and pertinent for us to anſwer. And this wee did the rather, for our reaſon mentioned in our letter, becauſe though all of us could not concurre to condemne all ſet Formes as unlawfull, yet wee could in this, *viz.* that though ſome ſet Forms may bee lawfull, yet it will not follow, that this of the Engliſh Liturgy is, therefore to remove all obſcurities, and breake all ſnares, and reſolve the queſtion in the true intent of it, wee were forced to diſtinguiſh of Formes, and ſo touch the true *Helena* of this controverſie; and therefore if any ſhall narrowly obſerve Mr. *Ball* his large defence of ſet Forms in generall, they ſhall finde thoſe wings ſpread forth in a very great breadth, to give ſome ſhelter and warmth to that particular Liturgie, then languiſhing, and haſtening (through age and feebleneſſe) towards its laſt end.

Reply. *It is true, peop'e ſeparate from our Liturgie, becauſe ſtinted, not becauſe this, or that, or ours in particular.*

Anſw. If becauſe it's ſtinted, then becauſe yours, for we know none properly ſuch, but yours, and it may well bee one offence to all godly conſciences, that yours are ſo impoſed and ſtinted as they bee: though it is hardly credible to us, (ſo farre as our obſervation reach) that the main cauſes of the godly withdrawing from your Liturgy, ſhould be the ſtinting of it, when ſo many corruptions in Matter and Forme have been objected againſt it, by the beſt godly Reformers. And ſeeing the ſame perſons will joyne with Prayers of godly Preachers, though they uſe the ſame forme of prayer uſually, and ſo in a large ſenſe freely ſtinting themſelves thereto, though not properly in ſuch ſenſe as your Liturgy is ſtinted.

Reply. *But ſay you, ſuch ſet Formes uſed by Preachers are diſliked alſo, and your reaſons, eſpecially the two laſt, why you admit not a ſtinted Liturgie, conclude againſt both in our underſtanding.*

Anſw. Wee deny not but ſome may diſlike the conſtant uſe of ſuch Formes, eſpecially when ſtudiouſly framed with elegancy of phraſes, and as the manner of ſome is; but doe any we now ſpeak of, condemne all uſe thereof? or withdraw from them that uſe them? which is now the caſe in hand: For our parts, wee neither know ſuch men; or if we did, we ſhould condemn ſuch minds.

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As for our Reasons in generall, or the two last you mention in particular, it passeth our understanding to conceive, how any such inference can bee made; if the Reply had formed the inferences from our arguments, it may bee wee should have seene more by the helpe of such spectacles. But passing over what we say to the Position, as we interpret it, you think fit to advertise us of some things, which are six.

Advert. 1. *Your reasons why you accept not a stinted Liturgie, are ambiguously propounded, and so, that such as looke at stinted Liturgies as images, forbidden Command. 2. may easily draw your words to their meaning.* *Reply.*

If our Reasons themselves being sound, and unanswered by you, contain any thing that may be drawn to such a Position; that cannot arise from the ambiguousnesse of words which are plaine, but from their abuse who mis-apply them. *Answ.*

Advert. 2. *The Reasons you bring against a set forme of Prayer, doe hold as strong against a set forme of Catechisme, confession and profession of faith, blessing, baptizing, and singing of Psalmes.* *Reply.*

1 Concerning forms of Catechismes, and confessions of Faith, if religiously and perspicuously framed, wee account them of singular use, (though abused by men) nor without some sacred allowance: yet from hence to infer the like use of set Formes of prayers, neither our reasons, nor any other will inforce: for Catechismes and Confessions (as well as Psalmes) in the nature of the thing, require in some sense a set and limited Forme; but publike prayers, though they may admit of a set and comely order in the generall, to prevent errour; yet of their owne nature they require no set Forme; for God gives us no new matter or doctrine daily to be beleeved, but he gives new matter of new affection in prayer daily. *Answ.*

2 If by set Forms of Catechismes and Confessions, bee meant (according to the termes of the Question) stinted Formes, like stinted Liturgies, *i.e.* beyond, or short of which, Ministers may not teach, or Christians beleeve and professe, then wee should say the same of these as wee doe of stinted Formes of Prayer; wee confesse there is danger in casting by all Formes of Confessions and Catechismes, lest through the instability of ungrounded and heady men, pretending new light, or searching after further light, the Churches adhere to nothing: and their Faith (as the learned *Leyden* Professors terme it) become *fides hebraria*, or

menstrua, The faith of an houre or moneth, and then cast it off the next. And on the other side there is danger, that by imposing such Confessions too far, that which is indeed *further light* be suppresst; wee therefore thinke it usefull and needfull to pave out such high wayes of Catechismes and Confessions, so as the subjects of Christ Jesus our King and Law-giver may walke therein without shackles, reserving liberty for further future light, in points lesse cleare, yet standing in a readinesse alwayes to confesse and hold fast the present truth which appeares most cleare.

3 Concerning Forms of blessing, baptizing, singing Scripture Psalmes, there is a far differing reason from this case, for the Lord himselfe hath left us Formes in these cases, not onely for instruction, but allowing the use of the same, as *Numb.* 6. 23,&c. *Luke* 10. 5. *Matth.* 28. 20. 2 *Chron.* 29. 30. and therefore such may bee used as hee hath left; yet the Lord hath not imposed (some of these at least) to bee used alwayes and onely in his Churches, much lesse doth hee allow any man to impose their own Forms upon his Churches, or conforme to such as are tyrannously imposed.

Reply. Third Advert. *We have not called you at this time to witnesse for, or against the corruptions of the Common-prayer-book, this you fall upon by straining the sense of our demands.*

Answ. Wee have spoken to this before, and we thinke whatsoever your intent and desire was, yet the nature of the thing, and the case it selfe gave us a just call to testifie against it, especially seeing the corruptions then increated in *England*, and the impositions were more rigid and violent.

Reply. *The reasons you bring against the Communion-booke, wee cannot approve them all; the exceptions against it wee know, but to esteem the whole for some corruptions found therein a Monument of Idolatry, that we have not learned.*

Answ. The Answer calls it not a Monument of Idolatry for some corruptions onely found in it, though the corruptions in matter and manner, bee objected as the first reason why wee used it not; but being never commanded of God, greatly abused unto Idolatry and superstition, and of no necessary use, the same that was in Popery for substance, which are the usuall arguments for abolishing Images, Ceremonies, and all Monuments of Idolatry; and wee marvaile how any could passe over these things in the Answer which might evince it to bee a

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Monument of Idolatry, as the argument of the Abridgement to which we referred, doth prove.

The argument in the Abridgement used against conformity to the Ceremonies, did not in the judgement of the Authors hold against the Liturgie, of which judgement we are. Reply.

It matters not whether they saw so far, and so judged, if indeed the reason and nature of Ceremonies, and the book be the same; for the first Reformers thought their arguments strong against oyle, creame, and spittle, &c. in Baptisme, but saw not that they would hold against the Crosse, Surplice, &c. as well; yet we doubt not but the Reverend Author did judge of all in the same manner; and so it is in this case. Answ.

Advert. 4. *If these reasons bee intended onely to shew why you receive not our forme of administration, it is that which wee are perswaded you know we never required of you, if to disallow the use of the Book amongst us altogether in things lawfull, good, and pertinent, they will not hold weight.* Reply.

1 Wee were told in the first Epistle of our Reverend and deare Brethren, that whiles wee lived in *England*, wee joyned in the same Ordinances and purity of worship, and therefore wee might have some just cause to cleare up our differing practise from disusing that forme of Administration there, considering that our differing practise might occasion others to rend off from your Administrations there, whereof you complain. Answ.

2 We doubt not but in the Popish Forms of Masse, Matten, and Evensong, &c. some things lawfull, good, and pertinent may bee found, yet would not the godly allow these very reasons wee alledge in the Answer sufficient to refuse the whole Forme, and so those good and lawfull things in that Forme? as that they are devised by men, without the command of God, imposed by an Antichristian power, abused to Idolatry and Superstition, wherein the people place much holinesse, and necessity, full of scandall, &c. and if these Reasons do not hold against this Forme in the Communion booke, the Reply should have acquited it from them: or else the consequence must bee yeelded in this case, as in the other, notwithstanding all the good and pertinent things therein. *John Simpson*, and *John Ardly* Martyrs in Q. *Maries* dayes, and faithfull Witnesses, made answer to the sixt article of *Bonner*, concerning the Masse, that 'tis of the Pope, not of Christ, and therefore not good, not having

having in it any goodneſſe, ſaving *Gloria in excelſis*, the Epiſtles and Goſpels, the Creed and Pater Noſter; and for this cauſe (they ſaid) they have not, nor will not come to heare Maſſe: the ſame anſwer was made by ſix more in thoſe dayes, mentioned by Mr. *Fox*. If therefore corrupt Formes may bee uſed becauſe of ſome things good and lawfull mixt with them, there ſhould have been ſhewn us ſome proofe for it, but if the meaning bee, that there may bee a lawfull uſe of thoſe things which are lawfull and good in it: wee ſay ſo too, (due circumſtances of their uſe being obſerved) but then wee fall off from the queſtion between us; otherwiſe wee know that things lawfull and good in themſelves, yet (not duly circumſtantiated) may be evill and ſcandalous in their uſe. Heare what *Paul* ſaith, it was lawfull for *Paul* to eate ſome kindes of meat, yet if it maketh my brother offend, I will eate no fleſh whiles the world ſtandeth, 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. Heare what the Authors of the ſecond admonition to the Parliament ſay, in Queen *Elizabeths* dayes, the Booke of Common-prayer, which of all others muſt not bee touched, becauſe they have gotten the State to beare it out, yet hee hath but a bad conſcience, that in this time will hold his peace, and not ſpeake it for feare of trouble; knowing that there are ſuch intolerable abuſes in it: if there were never an ill word or ſentence in all the Prayers, yet to appoint it to bee uſed, or to uſe it, as the Papiſts did their Mattens and Evenſong, as a fit ſervice to God, though the words bee good, yet the uſe is naught. But if this ſeem too ſharpe, heare what ——— a late godly and learned Writer ſpeakes, *Rejicimus illas precum, cultuſque publici formulas, quæ tyrannide quâdam, conſcientiis hominum, ut cultus divini partes eſſentiales imponuntur; quamvis quoad materiam ſunt legitimè diſpoſitæ, quoad formam & modum tamen quo inducuntur, illegitimæ crudelitatis inſtrumenta ſunt, & prætextus improbæ malitiæ & occaſiones violentæ tyrannidis in digniſſimos & optimos Eccleſiæ filios.*

G. Apol. cap. 7. Q. 2.

Reply. Advert. 5. *You are generally (you ſay) loath to meddle with the affaires of other Churches, unleſſe neceſſarily called thereunto: but when ſome upon requeſt (as we ſuppoſe) of private friends, and others out of their zeal and forwardneſſe have laboured to draw many to ſeparate from the ſacrament, becauſe miniſtred in a ſtinted Liturgie, wee cannot apprehend any juſt ground of this Apologie; the rent is wide, and ſome brethren had their hands deep therein, which made us crave your judgements and the reaſons thereof, to make up the breach.*

Anſw.

1 What you impute to some, if justly, wee grant will not allow this apologie to bee generall for all; but how many that *some* is, or *who* we know not, it may bee one or two; and if so, one or two exceptions will not much intringe a generall rule, nor hinder this generall apology. *Answ.*

2 If such brethren had a necessary Call to speake or write what they did, it hindreth not our apologie at all: the desire of private friends, which you onely suppose the moving cause, might bee very weighty, the satisfying of tender consciences of neare friends, or such as once depended upon our Ministery, in such a time of pressing humane inventions upon men, as that was, might bee a very urgent call to interpose: but that any have endeavoured out of zeale to draw many to separation from the Sacrament, upon such a ground as you say; as we utterly dislike such fire upon the top of the house, so it must be proved, before we can call to minde or acknowledge any such thing.

Advert. 6. J. D. *object to Mr.* P. *that his manner of preaching* (proceeding *it should be*) *was disorderly, in carrying to the Classis a matter, before hee had declared it to the Church, &c. and may not we with like reason object that this manner of proceeding is disorderly, in seeking to draw men to separation, because of a stinted Liturgie, before you had shewed us or other Brethren, whom it may concern, by Scripture, or reasons that a stinted Liturgie is unlawfull?* *Reply.*

What *J. D.* objects, wee cannot tell, seeing you neither quote the place, nor the Printer give us his words in any way to make sense; but so far as we guesse at the meaning, the case is very wide from this in hand. *J. D.* might justly complaine of wrong offered to him and the Church, in neglecting them, to goe immediately to the Classis, and yet some of our Brethren, at the requests of tender consciences, might declare their judgement, when no rule called them to write to their Pastors, which perhaps, were bitter persecutors, or if better, yet such as they had no knowledge of; and if any by such writings did abstaine from the sacrament for such corruptions, as their consciences would be defiled with, no hinderance from us was in the way, but that you might call them to account before the Church, and convince and censure them, if there were just cause; which was the objection against Mr. *P.* in flying presently to the Classis. *Answ.*

Chap.

CHAP. III.

2 Position.

That it is not lawfull to joyne in Prayer, or receive the Sacraments, where a ſtinted Liturgie is uſed: Or, as wee conceive your meaning to bee in this as in the former, &c. viz. *where and when that ſtinted Liturgie is uſed.*

Reply. *IF we miſtake not your judgement and practiſe both, you have born witneſſe againſt both that you call the rigid ſeparation, and this more moderate alſo; and wee humbly wiſh that the moderate doe not degenerate into the rigid ere long; it is very ſtrange if they take not great encouragement upon your grounds.*

Anſw. If you will needs account not joyning in that ſtinted impoſed Liturgy, to bee a moderate ſeparation, wee muſt confeſſe, we have witneſſed againſt ſuch ſeparation; yea, not onely conformed to that corrupt Worſhip, but alſo to divers of the Ceremonies thereof, ſome of us with ſhame before the Lord may confeſſe it: But we deſire that may be no prejudice to the truth ſince diſcovered to us: but wee have ever conceived, that the ſeparation witneſſed againſt, both by your ſelves and us, have been ſuch as to ſeparate from the Churches of *England* as no true Churches, the Miniſtery, as no true Miniſtery: their ſeparations from corruptions in Doctrine and Worſhip, their endeavour to enjoy all the ordinances of the Lord Jeſus in purity, if wee bee not miſtaken, your judgement and practiſe with ours, have alwayes approved; and the queſtion now in hand is not about a new kinde of ſeparation more moderate, from the Churches and Miniſtery of *England*; but whether the Liturgy of *England* be not indeed one of thoſe corruptions in Worſhip, which you and wee had need reject, as well as the ceremonies, and no longer conforme to the ſame. And wee heartily wiſh that the growing endeavours of the godly, after more purity of Worſhip, and to bee purged from all the pollutions of the man of ſinne, bee not too rathly branded with the *odium* of ſeparation: and breach of peace and unity of the Church. As for degenerating into the rigid ſeparation, wee think you need not feare it, upon our principles, no more then upon the common grounds of Non-conformiſts, and you know what they inferre upon thoſe principles, how

now justly it concernes you to consider, as well as us; but as it is truly observed in *England*, it was the justification and pressing of ceremonies and other corruptions, that drave many to separation, not the endeavour of further Reformation; so you may feare, the too too much conformity of Ministers to humane impositions, and justification of the Liturgie, &c. have and will more dangerously alienate godly minds from your Churches and Ministery, and so drive to separation, then all the principles and progresse of the godly in wayes of reformation: and wee shall refer it to the judicious and common experience, whether the discovery of the corrupt worship in the Liturgy, or contrary conformity to it, be the greater block of offence, and strengthens the hands of the Separatists most, which yet you after object unto us.

Wee suppose the Worthies of this renowned Parliament, together with those of the reverend Assembly, would not so soone have removed the whole frame and fabrick of this Book, nor wholly stopped up this pit, if building of battlements about it, and keeping watchmen neare it, to bid passengers take heed, had been the readiest way to cure separation: nor doe wee thinke that this reverend man of God, would have been in more jealousie and feare of us (if hee had considered how tenderly we returned our answer to the question) then of those faithfull witnesses in *Scotland*, who separated their lives into the hands of death, rather then communicate in the use of this Booke; and yet wee thinke they deserve a better place, then to bee ranked so neare to the rigid separation; notwithstanding for our selves we are heartily thankfull for what he humbly wisheth, and for his jealousie over us so farre as it is godly; but so farre as such wishes cast a cloud of evill suspition over us in the hearts of others, as if we were going faster then we knew where to stay, we wish humbly such words had been spared till some other time.

Concerning this distinction, a letter of this subject is cited, printed without the Authors knowledge, that put a difference indeed between the reasons of the Separatists proper to them *qua tales*, and other reasons used by himself, common to others studious of Reformation. To which we answer.

1 That letter acknowledgeth no such distinction of separation, rigid, and moderate, onely (if you will) a separation from Churches, and separation from the sins and corruptions of Churches, which latter is all we professe.

2 Those Reasons which the letter scribes to them, *quæ tales*, will wee suppose bee found in their Books thus farre, that the Prayers, Preachings, Sacraments, &c. are unlawfull, because offered in a false Church by a false Ministery for the subjects of Antichrists kingdome.

That there should be no Separatists in the world, because none, it is said now, plead against the Booke of Common-prayer as unlawfull, because offered up in a false Church; is strange to me, that this learned Author should not read or observe the same, exceeding frequently in the Separatists writings; take but a taste in the first pages of Mr. *Smith* against *Bernard* in his parallels, censure, and observations, his words *pag. 9.* are these, Hee would prove that an erroneous constitution of a Church, is a reall Idol, and the prayers they offer with the prayers of the wicked, comming from that false constitution, are tainted with the Idolatry of that constitution. And *pag. 10.* It is Idolatry to offer up service to God in a Church of a false constitution. And *pag. 13.* Tell mee Mr. *Bernard*, can there be a true Ministery, true baptisme, true faith, true prayer, true preaching and administring the supper, true excommunication, in a Church which is falsly constituted? Did the Lord accept the sacrifice of the Church constituted by *Jeroboam?* so *pag. 14.* A Church falsly constituted, is not accepted of God, neither are their actions ecclesiasticall, as prayer, preaching, &c. acceptable in the sight of God. And againe, a false Ministery, Worship, government, may bee in a true Church, through ignorance, and the like: but a true Ministery, worship, government cannot possibly bee in a false Church. We thinke it needlesse to recite more testimonies; *Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*, A good memory may sometimes fall asleep, and not see that, which is sometimes most obvious and visible. But what other arguments they have, are, or may bee common to others studious of Reformation, as their arguments against ceremonies are common with Non-conformists, and therefore if some of our grounds bee found in them, it doth not follow, they are shafts taken out of the same quiver, and peculiar to them, as you object.

Reply. *These reasons shall be common to all, that plead for the purity of Gods Ordinances, which were never taken to bee sound and true, either by the Reformed Churches abroad, or by the godly Brethren at home, dead or living, or yet by the most of the Brethren amongst whom they live, and hold society, or by any Minister and society holding the unity of the*

Spirit

Spirit in the bond of peace, these 1400. years and upward, unlesse within these few dayes, and that by a few onely.

Here is a great colour of Novelty and singularity objected to be in the grounds and reasons of the Letter, used against conformity to the Liturgy: but it is easie to conceive that the same common grounds of all Reformers, may be justly carryed on against such further corruptions, as they never saw: not attending their owne principles in such particulars, as was said before of the first Reformers, that purged out salt, creame, oyle, &c. not the crosse, &c. and so here it may fall out, that as the Lord is pleased to let in more light in this or that particular corruption; so upon common grounds it is rejected, though yet but one or few apply those grounds to such a particular case. Neither here was the number so few as is pretended, when this Reply was drawn up, or else at least, it is much increased of late time, since the Assembly and Parliament in *England* have so openly in their Directory witnessed against such stinted Formes, and generally the Churches of *Scotland* renounced that Liturgy of yours, as a piece of Popery. Besides all the Orthodox Churches in *New-England*, and *Holland*, and many godly in *England*. *Answ.*

As yet wee thinke most of them, that have separated are not so farre gone, as to condemne all our Assemblies as no Churches of Christ. *Reply.*

By this you seeme to insinuate, that notwithstanding our acknowledgement of your Churches and Ministery, wee may justly bee accounted amongst those wee properly call Separatists: but it is but your thought of most of them, without ground, contrary to their generall profession in their publique confessions and apologies. And therefore we see no reason of it, or that it toucheth us; but passing these generalls, let us come to the matter more particularly. *Answ.*

Your judgement concerning the Position, you deliver in three Propositions (for so many they bee for substance) in respect of the persons reading the Liturgie, or the thing it selfe that is read; as if any part of the Liturgie be read (put case some few select prayers onely) by an unable and ungodly Minister, it is unlawfull (say you) for the people to joyne in that case. But if unlawfull for the people to joyne, when an ungodly Minister readeth some few select prayers, it is either in respect of the Minister, or the prayers themselves; not of the Prayers themselves, for they be select and chosen, faultlesse, in respect of matter *Reply.*

and manner, & is taken for granted, unlesse that distribution bee to no purpose; if in respect of the Minister, then it is not lawfull to joyne with such an one, in any ordinance of God whatsoever.

In that you analyse our two Propositions into three, we shall not contend, but follow your method, yet wee cannot but marvaile at the liberty that is taken in stating the first Proposition, both leaving out and adding such things as will not stand with the termes in our Answer; and indeed this is too frequent in divers places of this Reply, which gives a great colour of strength unto the arguments, but when they come to be scanned, it will discover the impertinency of them.

For, 1 Although the Answer distinguisheth of the Liturgie, either of the whole, or of some select prayers which may bee conceived to bee lesse offensive, yet the application of this of select prayers, is onely made in the second proposition of the Answer, no way intended in the first. Neither doth the Answer confesse those prayers, as you say, to bee choyce and faultlesse for matter and manner, but which may bee conceived lesse offensive.

2 Whereas the Proposition is of an unable and ungodly Minister, such unlearned Idol-Priests that are countenanced and established by the Liturgie, and can doe no more then read the same, to the unspeakable hazard and ruine of a multitude of soules; you carry along your arguments onely in the terme of an ungodly Minister, which leaves out one chiefe ground of our proposition, *viz.* unable.

To reduce therefore this proposition unto its true state which the answer puts it in, which is thus, If the question bee of joyning in prayer with, and when that whole Liturgie is read, or where that which is used, (*viz.* though not the whole) is read by an unable and ungodly Minister: wee see not how it can bee lawfull to joyne, &c. where that which is read by an unable and ungodly Minister, cannot have reference to the select prayers, but onely was put in, to reach the whole case, lest any should say, may we not joyne, therefore if they read not all, (as sometimes such doe not, for haste to the Alehouse, Beare-baitings, &c.) And the case is so well known to our selves and others, what the manner of such Priests is, how farre they are from making any choyce of select prayers: or having any skill indeed so to doe; that if any bee more superstitious then others, they would soonest

ſooneſt chooſe them; ſo that it was farre from our thoughts to impute it to them, to read the ſelect prayers onely. The queſtion being rightly ſtated, the argument will halt very much; For wee ſay, it is unlawfull in both reſpects, and the rather, when jointly conſidered; and therefore you ſhould firſt have juſtified the whole Liturgy, or ſo much as ſuch Idol-Prieſts uſe to read to bee lawfull, and alſo the ſtanding and calling of thoſe men, before the argument can hold, both which you have wholly left naked without proofe, and argue onely about the lawfulneſſe of joyning with an ungodly Miniſter in the Ordinances of God, which will not reach this caſe. If one ſhould affirme it is unlawfull to goe to Mattens or Evenſong, when the whole is read, or that which is read, is done by a popiſh Prieſt, and you ſhould anſwer then, it is either becauſe of the Prayers or the Prieſt. Not the firſt, for the prayers (if ſelect) may bee good, and faultleſſe, and not becauſe of the Prieſt, for then wee may never joyne with an ungodly Miniſter in the Ordinances of God: The anſwer would bee very imperfect and impertinent, and juſt ſo it is here in the frame of the reaſon, though the corruptions in that ſervice and this be not alike we grant. But before wee anſwer to the ſecond part of your diſ-junction, let us conſider a little here once for all, the act of the people in joyning with the reading of this Liturgy, or ſo much of it, as is read uſually by ſuch Idol-prieſts. Firſt, concerning the Liturgy it ſelfe, if you reſpect the matter and forme, or manner of it, it would bee too tedious to rip up, what for matter hath been objected by the godly Reformers. Conſider but two things objected ſtrongly by Mr. *Cartwright* againſt the forme or manner of it. Firſt, that it is taken out of the Popiſh Maſſe-book, concerning which hee affirmeth, that although there were nothing in it unlawfull, or againſt the Word of God, (which ſaith hee) I wiſh there were not, yet no Word of God, no reaſon, nor example of the Ancient Churches, Jewiſh or Chriſtian, will permit us to uſe the ſame formes and ceremonies (*viz.* with Papiſts) being neither commanded of God, nor ſuch as there may not bee as good as they, and rather better eſtabliſhed, yea, conſidering how neare the Papiſts live amongſt us, it were more ſafe to conforme to the Ceremonies of the Turks that are farre off. And this hee ſpeaketh of the forme of Liturgy, as well as Ceremonies, *Cartw.* reply to *Whitgifts* anſwer to the admonition to the Parliament, *pag.* 131, 132. And although you ſeeme to make

light of this objection, after *page* 15. end, yet in a like case, when *Whitgift* had said, it is not materiall that Deanes, Canons came from the Pope; *Cartwright* replyeth thus; It is as if hee had said, it skilleth not, if they came out of the bottomlesse pit; for whatsoever commeth from the Pope, who is Antichrist, comes first from the Devill, *Cartw. Reply, pag.* 204.

Secondly, hee objecteth that absurd manner of chopping and interrupting the prayers, of which Mr. *Cartwright* saith, That if any man should make such a supplication to a Prince, he would thinke him to make his supplication before hee knew what to ask,
Ibid. p. 138. or that hee had forgotten some piece of his suit; or that he were distracted in his understanding. Much more might bee added, but wee have onely touched this sore, and in the words of that learned and zealous Reformer, that it may appeare, neither the opinion of that Booke, nor the reasons against it, are so new or proper to the Separatists, as is pretended. Now what comfort can any godly conscience have to joyn in, or conform unto such a form of Worship as this is?

Further consider the administration of the Sacraments, according to the Book (as we speak still of joyning in it) who knows not, that such must subject their children to that grosse Idol of the crosse, and see and approve the pollution of Gods Ordinances with the same: and at the Lords table joyne in that Idolatrous gesture of kneeling; and therefore how the godly can joyn lawfully in the whole, or such parts as those Idol-priests dispense, let all Non-conformists judge; and it is well knowne, how superstitiously precise such are, in pressing all conformity to every gesture and ceremony prescribed in their Booke, which they so idolize, as they have good cause, being that which maintaines them.

Secondly, if wee consider the imposition hereof by the Prelates and late strict pressing thereof upon the people to be present and conforme fully to it, as well as upon Ministers to use it. The very yeelding of conformity thereto, doth miserably cast away the liberty purchased by Christ to his Churches, inthrall the Churches to Antichrist, and lift up the power of Antichrist in his tyrannous usurpations upon the Churches of Christ.

Thirdly, we might adde the dangerous consequences and scandals that follow from admitting this Liturgy, which being touched in our answer to the first Position, we here passe over.

These

These things considered, it appeares, not onely that there was need to disprove the first part of your disjunction, which you declined in stating the question; but also the truth of the Position it selfe is confirmed. Now let us consider your proof of the second part of your disjunction; which is thus,

If in respect of the Minister, then it is not lawfull to joyn with such an one in any Ordinance of God. For if the Minister make it unlawfull, then all communion in any part of Gods Worship with such Ministers is unlawfull: and so the Churches in all ages of the world, the Prophets, our Saviour Christ, the Apostles, and the faithfull in the Primitive Church, sinned in holding communion with such, when the Priests were dumbe dogs, &c. but we never read that the Prophets, our Saviour Christ, the Apostles did ever forbeare themselves, or warne the faithfull not to communicate with such in the ordinances of Worship. Our Saviour charged the Disciples to beware of the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, but never forbad them to communicate with them in the ordinances of God. Reply.

To this we answer; First, that if you speake to the case in hand of those unable and ungodly Ministers of *England*, Readers (as they are called) of the Common-service, wee grant it is not lawfull to communicate in a stated way with them, in any ordinance of Worship properly Ministeriall; in any act that private persons may performe, wee may communicate with them, but not in Ministeriall worke, as Sacraments; for although being imposed on any Church as Ministers, and so received by them, their Ministeriall acts are not a nullity; yet if wee speake of the lawfulnesse of such their act of receiving them, then the Church sinneth in choosing them, or being imposed, in receiving them, and submitting to their Ministery, being such as are utterly contrary to the rule of Christ, and rejected of him. And by the like reason the godly sinne in receiving Sacraments, &c. from them, as Ministers of Christ, knowing they intrude into that office, and have no authority by the rule of Christ so to doe. Wee may heare a private gifted Christian prophecy, but if hee intrude without a lawfull calling into the Ministery, we may not receive him, nor approve of him therein. Answ.

Cyprians speech is commonly noted, that *Plebs maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi*; yet the occasion of it is not so generally observed, which is this, *Plebs obsequens praeceptis Dominicis, Deum metuens, à peccatore proposito*

separare

separare se debet, nec se ad sacrilegia sacerdotis sacrificia miscere, cum ipse maxime habet potestatem eligendi, &c. that is, the people observing divine precepts, and fearing God, ought to separate themselves from a wicked Minister, neither joyne themselves to the sacrifices of a sacrilegious Priest, seeing they chiefly have power of chooſing worthy Ministers, and rejecting unworthy.

Secondly, wee see no demonstrative argument that the Priests and Pharisees were wholly unable for the worke of those times, as these wee speake of are for——: though the Priests, *Esay* 56. 10. were dumb dogs that cannot barke; yet it seemes by the place to be meant actually, rather then habitually, through their slumbering or security there mentioned, not telling the people of their sinnes, nor warning them of judgements, rather then of their totall inability. Men of good parts and able gifts may be actually such dumb dogs, as seldome preach, or never to purpose, and bee spiritually ignorant through much prophanenesse, yet not totally deprived of common gifts: It is most evident that the Pharisees were blinde, yet taught the people, and hence the Disciples were permitted to heare them, but what is this to the question, which is of unable, as well as of ungodly Ministers?

Peter Martyr in 1 Kings 12. verse 31.

Thirdly, suppose some of the Priests and Levites were unable, yet the Ministery of the Old Testament was limitted by God himselfe to the tribe of Levi, and that by succession, which is farre otherwise in the New Testament, being left to the Churches election, and therefore they had no power to reject them, or withdraw from them, when they had ministred the ordinances of God.

Fourthly, suppose some of them were not called of God, being not lineally descended of that tribe, yet those things wherein the faithfull, Christ and his Apostles, and others did communicate with them, were necessarily commanded of God, *viz.* sacrifices, offerings, &c. in the Temple, which seale of God wee see not stamped upon this Liturgy in question, to make it currant.

Pet. Mart. Com. Loc. de Idol. in prac. l. 1.

And thus *Peter Martyr* answereth in the like case, that though there were many pernicious doctrines taught by Scribes, Pharisees and wicked Priests, yet *sacrificandi ritus*, &c. the rites of sacrificing were not changed, for the same oblations were offered, which the Law commanded, and therefore the Saints might use them, having the word of God conjoyned with them.

Fifthly, what you grant concerning Christ his warning his Disciples

Disciples to take heed of the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, no doubt hee did the like, concerning the corruptions of the Priests in their administrations of Gods ordinances, and wee doubt not, but you will acknowledge that the Prophets and Apostles did or ought to abstaine from all actuall communion with those corruptions, and the Lord Jesus out of question did abstaine: which being so, wee may retort this argument thus in regard of conformitie to ceremonies, If it bee not lawfull to partake in the Ordinances of God, where wee must actually joyne with such ceremonies, then Christ, the Prophets and Apostles must not have joyned in any ordinance of God in severall ages of the Church, when worse or as ill corruptions were admixed with that worship: But they never refused the ordinances of worship for such corruptions; Therefore wee should not now for these ceremonies abstaine; put case for kneeling at the Lords Supper, &c. If you please to solve this knot, the same answer will serve our turne as well. Iohn 2.15,16.

It is not for private Christians to withdraw themselves from the ordinances of worship, and communion of the Church, because such are permitted to deale in the holy things of God, whom they judge or know unfit; when men joyne in the worship of God with unworthy Ministers, they doe not countenance them, their place and office, but obey the commandement of God, who requires their attendance upon his highnesse in that way and meanes. Reply.

First, wee grant it is not alwayes for private Christians so to leave the communion of a Church in the ordinances of God, for such a reason, but if they have first done their part according to their place to reforme or cast out such an unworthy and unable ministry, and cannot, or see no hope to procure one sufficient to edifie the Church, hee may and ought to betake himselfe to some other Church, where hee may bee edified, and it is a great mistake to thinke, (in the constitution of the Gospell) that a Christian cannot reject all fellowship with such Idoll Priests, but hee must forsake the ordinances of Christ, or rent off from the Church, when indeed hee deprives himselfe of many ordinances in joyning with them, and attaines them in forsaking of them. *Answ.*

Secondly, if we consider wherein the outward call of all Church Officers in the New Testament lies, *viz.* in a great part in the choice of the Church, or at least in their after consent and receiving of them, being chosen by others for them, *Act.* 1. and 6. and 14. how can any godly man receive, submit unto, or acknowledge

such unable wretches by receiving Gods ordinances from them, as Ministers, but they must needs countenance them in their places, and set up to themselves an Idoll or meanes of worship to edifie themselves, which God never appointed; for let it bee proved that ever God appointed readers of a Liturgie to edifie the people.

Answ. Thirdly, but that to joyne in worship with such should bee to obey Gods command, who requires attendance upon himselfe in that way and meanes, wee thinke it a speech not so throughly digested, if wee carry in our eye the case now in hand, concerning these Idoll Priests and Silver shrines. For where can they shew any such command? or why hath it been suffered by any of our Brethren, that the godly living under such Priests, have been so frequently absent from them, reading the liturgy, to heare their Sermons? Nay why have they not told them, they were bound to attend upon God in hearing their Sir *John* read at home? Wee appeale to all consciences, whether they would approve of any godly man, that would rest in such meanes, and not call him to leave all his outward conveniences, for some godly able Ministry: or at least not to attend on them, but get where they may bee better edified.

Reply. *To goe no further then the Text you quote,* Hosea 4. 6, 7. *Because thou hast despised knowledge I have rejected thee; properly the Text speaketh of the ten Tribes and the Priests amongst them, who worshipped the Calves, &c. whom the Lord threatens to reject; but neither this nor any other Text proves, that people joyning in worship with such, doe countenance them in their places.*

Answ. The Text proves that God rejects such Priests as these are, (just like *Jeroboams* Priests of the meanest of the people) and that was all it was alledged for, and that receiving such as Ministers doth countenance them in their places, was proved before. And if it bee meant of *Jeroboams* Priests, as you say, the approved practise of the godly in those dayes, 2 *Chron.* 11. 16. will well justifie and lead us to reject and leave these also.

Secondly, there seemes to bee foure arguments, why the people should withdraw from these kind of Priests: First, in regard of their miserable perishing for want of knowledge by their meanes. Secondly, because the people in receiving them, rejected knowledge, as *Calvin* notes upon the place. Thirdly, because God would take a time to disburthen the Church of them, whence *Dru-*

sius

sine in locum wisheth, *utinam tales hodie à ministerio amouerentur.* Fourthly, because the Lord would cast off their children from being his, for this sinne, as *Calvin* also notes upon the place, the promise of shewing mercy to a 1000. generations, being chiefly annexed to the observers of the second Command, and the instituted meanes of worship, which those Priests never were.

On the contrary, if you will extend this Text to all unworthy Ministers of what sort soever, whom the Word of God condemns, as not approved Ministers of God, &c. Reply.

Wee intended no other sorts then such as wee have in hand, the unable and ungodly Idoll Priests of England, and therefore this discourse concernes us not. For wee freely confesse, that it is lawfull in divers cases, at least for a time, to communicate with such unworthy Ministers as may bee contained in your description: but that people must and ought to joyne with such in the worship of God, and sinne, if they separate from the ordinances, (as you say) the Scriptures alledged teach not this so evidently, that wee can see, as 1 *Sam.* 2. 12,13. 17.24. that imputation, Verse 24. They make the Lords people to transgresse, doth not depend immediatly on Verse 13,14.17. but on Verse 22.23. where they are charged to have layne with the women, the other passages being interrupted by the story of *Samuel* and his Mother, Verse 18,19. 20,21. So *Jer.* 8.8,9. *Micah* 3. 11,12. containe onely threats against wicked Ministers, but not a word to prove people ought to joyne with them, &c. *Phil.* 1. 15. speaking of such as preach and preach Christ, though not of sinceritie, doth not reach such Ministers as the word condemnes: for many such may be approved Ministers by the Word, having a call according to the same; but wee shall not contend in this case, wherein wee doe not dissent, so that Christians bee left to their lawfull libertie of withdrawing from Ministers grossely wicked, and Teachers of false Doctrin, or idle and unsufficient, when they cannot reclaime them, or remove them in the use of all lawfull meanes within their power. Answ.

The reasons whereby the ancient Churches condemned the Donatists and Catharists for their voluntary and seditious separations, and the moderne Churches condemne the Anabaptists for their renting from the body of Christ, will hold against separation from the Prayers of the Congregation, because they are read by an ungodly Minister. Reply.

Wee deny that wee teach or hold such separation, because read by an ungodly Minister, as is sufficiently shewed before; but what

we speak is against conformitie to and communion with the corruptions of the Liturgie especially used by an *unable* as well as ungodly Minister, and therefore the arguments mentioned will hold against our proposition, just as the accusations and imputations of Donatisme, Puritanisme, Anabaptisme, which the Prelates cast upon all Non-conformists and men studious of reformation, will hold and fasten upon them, which is nothing at all.

Rep'y. *The second Proposition, where the whole Liturgie is used though by an able and godly Minister, it is not lawfull to joyne in prayer in that case; Wee cannot bee of your judgement herein, for in the times of the Prophets, and our Saviour Christ as great abuses no question were found, &c. but they never taught people to separate from the holy things of God.*

Answ. First, wee must still mind the Reader of the true and full state of the question, which in our answer is of joyning in prayer, with, and when that whole Liturgy is used, and hee that joynes with that whole Liturgie must needs bee supposed to have actuall communion with all the corruptions thereof what ever they bee, and therefore though this Proposition reach to the practise of able and godly Ministers, yet let none thinke wee plead herein separation from their ministery, but onely that people may not conforme with them to any corruption in worship, and by this proposition also the Author might easily have seene that wee denied the other (which was woven in with this) not because of the ungodlinesse of the Minister alone as hee carried his dispute, but chiefly in respect of the corruptions of the worship, together with the unlawfulnesse of such a ministery that is both unable and ungodly.

Secondly, concerning the argument it runs as full for conformitie to all the corrupt ceremonies of the booke as the corrupt worship it selfe therein, as was said before, cleare the one, viz. nonconformitie to ceremonies, shew a reason why you will separate from the Sacrament, because you will not kneele according to the booke, and you answer your argument here alledged against us: but the reply proceeds.

Reply. *And if presence at formes of prayer bee not lawfull by reason of the corruptions alledged, there can bee no visible societie named, since 200. yeeres after Christ or thereabout, wherein a Christian might lawfully joyne in prayer, reading the Scriptures, hearing the word, or participation of the Sacraments; their Doctrines, prayers, rights being lesse pure then ours: but no man wee hope will bee so bold as to affirme the state of the Churches within*

within 200. yeers after Christ to bee so miserably decayed that the faithfull could not without sinne hold communion with them in the foresaid ordinances of God.

First, this argument holds as strongly for conformitie to the ceremonies as to the whole booke of Common Prayers, as was said before. *Answ.*

Secondly, this is a dangerous kind of reasoning from the practise of the faithfull in corrupt times of the Church, especially when they are declining, and growing clouds of darkenesse, and superstition overspread the Churches. It is no breach of charitie to thinke that through the iniquitie of the times, the godly lived in many evils through ignorance and weakenesse which after light is come into the Churches wee ought to abandon wholly; these are times of light and of the consumption of Antichrist, and time for us to abolish his Liturgies and corrupt formes of worship as well as Images, ceremonies, &c. Who doe not pitie the weakenesse of godly *Bilny* and others that seeing some grosse corruptions were yet so devoutly obedient to the Church (as they called it) in many grosse superstitions? and the like may bee said of those former times, and wee see not but this reason will goe farre in justification of communion with many false worships of Antichrists that are not grosly idolatrous.

Thirdly, it is a great charge upon those times to say no visible societie throughout the world can bee named since 200. yeeres after Christ, that was not lesse pure then England in Doctrine, rites, &c. It may bee, that as generally Churches were corrupt, so they contemned and censured such as professed more puritie: but that there were some visible assemblies more pure may bee conceived by that testimony given to *Aerius* and many orthodox Christians with him, though condemned for a Hereticke, in that which wee all now hold to bee an undoubted truth; also after the *Waldenses* casting off the Pope and his will worships, and the following reformed Churches, those of *Scotland*, *Geneva*, and divers others in *France* and *Switserland*, *&c.* whose Doctrines, rites and administrations wee doubt not will bee confessed more pure then English Churches. It would bee too tedious, and in these knowing times needlesse to search all records and to compare the puritie of the prayers, and rites of these with former times, wee read of very few formes used for 300. yeeres, some short ones they had which are retained yet in our Liturgie, with many more, and

those formes they had, not imposed nor stinted, which is the great offence of this, untill about the yeere 406. and there wee read in the *Milevitan* Councell that no prayers should bee used in Churches but what were either composed of able and sufficient men, or approved by the Synods, and this was determined onely in regard of the ignorant Ministery of those contentious and heretical times, as *Chemnitius* observes, *ne forte aliquid contra fidem vel per ignorantiam, vel per minus studium sit compositum.* If the Roman Bishops did multiply (as indeed they did excessively (unlesse their owne admirers erre grossely) rites and formes of prayer, yet it is well knowne how long it was ere the Churches in other places submitted to their power, so that this comparison might well have beene spared. To conclude, though wee say not that all Churches since 200. yeeres after Christ were so miserably decayed, that the faithfull might not without sinne communicate with them, yet wee may bee bold to say many of them were so corrupt, that the faithfull did not, nor could not communicate in many parts of Gods worship without sinnes of ignorance conforming to the corruptions themselves; and that if they had seene and discovered the evill of them, they ought, and we beleeve would have abstained from divers ordinances in regard of the corrupt administrations of them; yea after all meanes used to purge them out, and not prevailing, they ought and would have withdrawn themselves to more pure Churches, or erected such amongst themselves.

Conc. Miliv. Can. 12.

Reply. *The prayers of the Ministers conceived or stinted in a set forme bee not his private prayers, but the publike prayers of the assembly; but you will not say the people ought not to joyn with their pastour therein if ought bee amisse, for matter, manner, or both.*

Answ. There is a wide difference betweene the whole Liturgie, so imposed, and so clogged, as is before shewed: and such prayers of the Minister having something amisse. But you may put the case so, as it would bee unlawfull for people to joyne in such prayers also: as if the Minister for matter usually pray to Saints; for manner, turne himselfe, and fix his eye on a Crucifix.

Reply. *It is all one to the people in this case, whether the fault bee personall (as some distinguish) or otherwise; knowne before hand or not knowne; for if simple presence defile, whether knowne before hand or not, all presence is faultie, and if simple presence defile not, our presence is not condemned by reason of the corruptions knowne, whereof wee stand not guiltie.*

First, we diſtinguiſh not here between perſonall and miniſteriall faults, but object againſt the perſonall act of him that joynes with that whole Liturgie, and ſo in the corruptions of it, as hee muſt needs doe, that joyns with the whole, not onely ſaying *Amen* to them, but as is knowne he takes his ſhare in thoſe ſhreds of prayers, Reſponds, &c. which in Mr. *Cartwrights* judgement is ſo abſurd, as makes a man ſeeme out of his wits. And therefore his perſonall, actuall conformitie muſt needs carry guilt, and therefore there is more then ſimple preſence in this caſe, as is cleare to any underſtanding. *Anſw.*

Secondly, it is not all one whether the faults bee knowne, or not knowne beforehand, as appeares plainely, 1 *Cor.* 10. 27, 28, 29. where wee ſee, if a man come to a feaſt, and know not they eate with reference to the Idoll, nor that any take offence, he may eate without asking any queſtion: but if hee know ſuch things, he may not eate.

Beſides, publique ſinfull actions of Miniſters are either, 1 Accidental & occaſional, or 2ly. known & appointed in a ſtated ſervice; now the frailties of a Miniſter, which accidentally fall in and are not known before, nor are any part and eſſence of the ſervice, unto which men that come, doe or ſhould take themſelves to bee called, hinder not communion; becauſe they doe not *præ ſe ferre* by their preſence to attend and obſerve them, but the corruptions of the Liturgie are knowne and appointed, and to which and with which the impoſers call others to joyne as in a ſtated ſervice to God; the uſe of which if it bee an humane frailtie in Gods Miniſters, not yet convinced of the evill thereof, yet for thoſe to communicate herein, who know ſuch evills, have ſurely paſſed the bounds of frailtie and infirmitie; becauſe in this action of prayer there is not onely communion by way of preſence, as it is in hearing the word, but communion of action: publique prayer being the common action of the whole Church towards God. There can be no prayer by any man offered to God, but there will be ſome humane frailties attending on it; if therefore for this cauſe wee ſhould reject communion in prayer, wee ſhould reject the ordinances of God, and never joyne in any prayer in this world; but the corruptions of the Liturgie are not ſuch, but that they may bee more eaſily caſt off, then kept.

This caſe ſtands not in tolerating faults in another (as thereply makes it) but in actuall joyning with the ſinnes of another, wherein

wherein hee that joyneth is involved, and therefore whether they bee corruptions, that may bee tolerated or not in another, yet if sinnes, they may not bee practised and so joyned in with another. And therefore the case you put of communion with any person obstinate in errour, till hee may bee convinced, is nothing to this purpose. For wee must not joyne with him in his error, no not an houre, though wee may tolerate him a moneth.

Reply. *Hath not Christian wisedome and experience of humane frailties lessoned you (deare brethren) to beare one with another in matters of greater consequence, then any have, or can bee objected truely against the forme of prayer in use among us?*

Answ. The Lord hath lessoned us to tolerate and beare with many humane frailties not onely in one another, but also in our deare brethren abroad; but to joyne with the best of men in conformitie to knowne and grosse corruptions in worshipping God, or to stoop so low, to the insolent tyranny of usurping Prelates, as to beare on our backs their whole Liturgie, and the corruptions thereof, wee confesse wee have not yet learned, and now wee hope never to goe to that schoole againe to learne the same.

Reply. *And why such corruptions should not bee ascribed to humane frailtie, we see not. For if a godly Minister make use of a booke, in things which hee judges lawfull for matter and manner, the corruption of him that useth it, according to his judgement, from what cause can it spring but humane ignorance and frailtie?*

Answ. First, the learned replier is very apt to forget the termes of the Proposition, which is of the whole Liturgie, not of some things in it, that hee may judge lawfull, to judge the whole lawfull, wee thinke none of those who sent the questions doe.

Secondly, our question is not whether the Minister use the book of humane frailtie, but whether the worship offered therein, bee not so corrupt for matter and manner, as puts a great difference betweene it, and the prayers of a Minister that may bee subject to faylings of humane frailtie. Wee doubt not, but *Bilney*, *Latimer*, &c. used the prayers and ceremonies of the Church of Rome, out of humane frailtie, yet the service it selfe and those ceremonies of holy water, holy bread, &c. which *Latimer* turned to as good use, as hee could, were evill and no way to bee conformed unto by the godly.

Thirdly, there are many things done of others through humane

mane frailtie, that is, ignorantly and in some measure perversely, yet such frailties, though they are to bee very long tolerated in the man, yet every humane frailtie is not so to bee tolerated, as to bee communicated with; for the grossest Idolatry in Popery may in this sense, if ignorantly done, bee accounted humane frailtie. It is true, wee may bee freed from communicating in anothers sinne two wayes. 1. By bearing witnesse against his sinne, or 2ly by withdrawing from the person committing it. There were times wherein the Lord raised up witnesses against the growing abominations of Antichrist for many yeeres; and there are times (as *Cameron* well observes) wherein the Lord commands his people not onely to beare witnesse, but to come out of *Babylon*. The case may be so put as that wee may quit our hands from communicating with other men, in their sinfull worship, by bearing witnesse onely against the sinne, yet communicating with them in the rest; *& è contra* the circumstances may bee such, as that wee best free our selves from sinne, by withdrawing from them in such acts. And wee freely confesse wee know not how to acquit others that communicate in the whole Liturgie, without the one or the other.

Reply. *Wee rest assured you question not the integritie of many, who make much more use of the booke, then onely in a few select prayers.*

Answ. You may so doe, and wee rest assured you question not the integritie of many that have conformed to the ceremonies, yet wee hope you will not justifie them in that act, no more then we doe any in this.

Reply. *From the bottome of our hearts, wee pray that the Lord would remove out of his Church what ever offends, and yet all things might be so done, as might be approved in the consciences of all.*

Answ. Wee not onely joyne with you in this hearty desire, but blesse God that wee live to see the same so farre accomplished in a good part of England, as it is; but as wee are perswaded the growing light and zeale of many godly Ministers and Christians, that have discovered the evill of the booke it selfe, as well as the ceremonies thereof, and their resolute rejection of the same, was one blessed meanes hereof, so wee feare the pleas and indeavours of some brethren to excuse it and the use of it, will be a dangerous meanes to uphold in the hearts of many too good an opinion of it, and loathnesse to cast it quite away to the Moles and Bats, from whence it first came.

Reply. *To aggravate faults, especially when it tends to draw away people from the ordinances of God, is no lesse evill then to excuse them, it may bee greater.*

Answ. Wee grant at some times and in some cases it may bee so, but in matters of corrupt worship, wherein God is so jealous and at such a time as this was; when the burthensome corruptions of humane traditions so violently imposed on the Churches, grew to such a number and unsupportable weight to the consciences of so many, wee doubt not to affirme, that now extenuations were farre more dangerous and offensive to the Lord: wee cannot but with sad hearts consider and call to minde how many weake Christians have ventured to swallow downe all manner of humane traditions and worships imposed upon them, imboldned much (wee feare) by the examples, if not the reasonings of many godly Ministers, which scandall some of us with many amongst you have have cause to bewayle before the Lord and give satisfaction before the world; And wee hope our departure from these burdens, and flight into these wildernesses to enjoy Christ in more pure ordinances of his worship, and the witnesse wee have thereby borne against them, have not been in vaine through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Reply. *In them that joyne according to Christs command (and libertie of absence from Christ hath not been shewed) notwithstanding the corruptions, wee hold the prayers to bee an holy and acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, and pleasing to Jesus Christ.*

Answ. How any man can joyne with this whole Liturgie according to Christs command, who in the second commandement forbids all humane devices in his worship, whereof this Liturgie is so full; it is hard for us to conceive, and strange to see it affirmed: and that Libertie from Christ to bee absent cannot bee shewed. The whole sentence as it standeth, wee confesse to us seemes an high justification thereof, which wee little expected.

Reply. *The corrupt sacrifice is that which the deceiver bringeth voluntarily, and out of neglect, having a male in his flock, but the godly bringeth himselfe and godly desires according to the will of God, and the corruptions in matter or manner are not his, they cleave not to his sacrifice to staine and pollute it. The Text in* Malach. 1. *is misapplyed, and wee desire such to alledge this passage against simple presence at the prayers of the Liturgie, advisedly to consider whether God allow them to make such application of his truth, which we much doubt of, to say no more.*

That

That people joyning in the whole Liturgie, voluntarily offer up the same, wee thought had beene no question: If any joyne by feare and compulsion (though the will in this case is not forced, for *mixta actio* is *voluntaria*) [wee thinke that will not ease, but aggravate the evill, arguing a reluctancy or doubtfulnesse at least in his conscience, and so what hee doth is not of faith, and therefore sin, *Rom.* 14.] 2ly. What you say of the faithfull here, might be said for the faithful in *Malachi* his time, if any godly man came with godly desires to *Jerusalem* to worship, and then carelesly buy and take a corrupt sacrifice for cheapnesse, ease, &c. shall hee not bee counted (at least in part) this deceiver, and beare the curse? And why not so here in this case? Let a man bring himselfe, and never so godly desires, yet if hee will joyne in a knowne corrupt service, will his godly desires excuse him? shall not his broken absurd responds, his standing at the Creed, kneeling at the Sacrament, &c. all which hee must doe, if hee joyne in the whole *Liturgie*, shall none of these cleave to his sacrifice? what though the Minister offer the service? so did the Priest the sacrifice; But both in the name of the people, and they joyning with him in offering the same to God. 3ly. Concerning *Malach.* 1. 13, 14. the more advisedly wee consider it, the more perswaded wee are, the Lord allow us to make such application of the truth contained in it, and wee thinke others will bee of our mind, not onely in respect of the similitude that is in this case, with that in *Malachi*, but also if wee consider, what an argument the Lord useth to convince them of their corruptions and carelesnesse in his service, Verse 11. wherein the Lord upbraids the Jewes and provokes them to jealousie, as the Apostle *Paul* speakes, by declaring the reverend esteeme of his name amongst the heathen, and that every where Incense should bee offered and a pure offering to his name. And what is that Incense, and pure offering, but the pure prayers, and worship of God that should be in all Gentile Churches under the Gospell? as *Tertullian*, *Eusebius*, *Jerom* and *Austin* with others expound it. And hee applies it againe, Verse 14. I am a great King, and my name shall bee great amongst the heathen: If then the Lord oppose the pure prayers and worship of Gentile Churches to the corrupt careless sacrifices of the Jewes, the application is not onely sutable, but the place containes a sad admonition to all Gentile Churches, that by their corrupt worships, and Incense, so farre frustrate (as it were) Gods

Answ.

expectation and glorying of their pure oblations.

Reply. *Your third Proposition. That as you are very tender of imputing sinne to those men that joyne in some select prayers read by an able and godly Minister, so on the other side, you are not without feare, lest such joyning may bee found unlawfull, unlesse it may appeare, that the Ministers with whom they have communion, neither give scandall by reading them, nor give unlawfull honour to a thing abused to Idolatry and Superstition, nor doe suffer themselves to bee sinfully limited in the reading of them.*

1 *Wee cannot conceive how you should imagine the practise of a godly Minister in reading some few select prayers to bee scandalous, or offensive in the Congregations, when the people generally in their assemblies and in the whole land were perswaded of the lawfulnesse of that course, till now of late times some have beene drawne away to separate; who yet by warrant of Scripture produce nothing of weight, to countenance that practise.*

Answ. Concerning this Proposition, wee doe ingenuously confesse, that it may seeme over rigid and tending to separation, and therefore we will not wholly justifie the same: yet diverse things there bee, which may much mitigate the seeming rigidnesse of it.

1 In the words of the answer, where wee doe not determine any thing positively, wee doe not impute sinne to any in such a case, wee say onely that wee are not *without feare*, lest it may bee found unlawfull, where any scandall, unlawfull honour, or sinfull limiting bee found in the Ministers: and if our feares bee needlesse, wee hope, such as know how jealous the Lord is in matters of his worship will easily forgive us.

2 Because you marvell wee should bee so timerous in this case, wee shall give you some reasons of it, which perhaps may abate much the marvell or wonder.

First, let it bee remembred that these select prayers are yet a part of that Liturgie, which is acknowledged to bee corrupt in matter and manner and clogged with such evill consequences as are afore touched; Taken out of the Masse-booke, &c. And Master *Parker* (who was no separatist) doubts not to affirme, that the touching of Antichrists things maketh uncleane, for which hee cites, 2 *Cor.* 6.17. *Haggai* 2.14, *John* 4.23. *Park. of the Crosse, part* 1. *pag.* 137.

Secondly, let it be considered that this booke is imposed by an unlawfull Antichristian authoritie of the Prelates, to whom to give place and subjection in any thing is justly to bee questioned.

And

And wee know that a man may acknowledge his fealtie and hold his Lands of the Lord of the Manner by a ſmall rent, as well as by a greater.

Thirdly, conſider this corrupt Service-booke hath beene over-long tolerated and borne withall in the Engliſh Churches: it deſerveth not ſo honorable a buriall as the Jewiſh worſhip: but hath ſtunke above ground twice 40. yeeres, in the noſtrills of many godly, who breathed in the pure ayre of the holy Scripture, being witneſſed againſt by the writings and ſufferings of many godly Miniſters and Chriſtians in England and Scotland.

Fourthly, many godly men (it is well knowne) have been (of late times eſpecially) offended at many good Miniſters ſilence in theſe things, that they would no more plainely and boldly diſcover the corruptions in that booke, and at their compliance with the ſame.

Fiftly, theſe are times of more light, whereby the Lord is conſuming Antichriſt, with the breath of his mouth. And therefore we have cauſe the more to feare how we meddle with any thing of his.

Sixtly, conſider the ſeaſon when this anſwer was ſent, was it not at a time, when ſuperſtitious opinions of the whole booke and the ceremonies thereof, were growne to a great height in the mindes and hearts of very many? when divers ſuperſtitious Popiſh worſhips, as bowing at the name of Jeſus, reading at the Table ſet Altar-wiſe, &c. were added to the heape of former corruptions? when the tyranny of the Prelates raged in the preſſing of the booke, and their other humane inventions? when many Miniſters and people (well thought of by the beſt) were carried away ſhamefully with theſe things? when many weake Chriſtians were ſtaggering and wavering and looking at the judgement and practiſe of their guides, ready to ſtand or fall with them?

Laſtly, conſider that things lawfull in themſelves may bee inexpedient; becauſe offenſive in their uſe, and ſo farre unlawfull; which offence wee chiefly looked at in this act, as appeares by our anſwer.

Let all theſe things bee laid together and weighed in an equall ballance (which wee hope our brethren are now at ſome libertie and leaſure to doe) and let the conſciences of all ſpeake, whether it was not high time, for all the godly in England to take unto them that zeale and courage, which was ſoone after in our Bre-

thren of Scotland, to cast off and wholly abandon the book it self and all the formes of it, and use of the same in every part and peece thereof? At least wee hope you will cease to marvell at our timerousnesse of such a season, how ever wee confesse, wee have sometime been more bold in the darke.

These considerations premised, as they may in a great measure abate the seeming rigour of the proposition: so they will much take off the edge of the Reply. For it will appeare that all conformitie of Ministers and people to any parcells of that booke, at such a season as this was, is a farre differing case from those that are put in some of the replies.

1 To the first reply then, wherein you put it beyond imagination, that such a practise should bee scandalous or offensive, wee know not what you have observed in some particular congregations neere you: but what ever have beene the opinions of men formerly concerning this practise, yet you know that the booke in generall hath been condemned of all godly reformers, and the use of any part of it hath been counted burdensome to many for the reasons named. But of later times, as the booke and conformitie thereto was urged more hotly, so the spirits of very many grew more zealous against it, and began to loath it, and to withdraw wholly from it; many very inquisitive about the lawfulnesse or unlawfulnesse of joyning with it at all, and your selves complaine of the withdrawing of many, from joyning in the ordinances, where it was used, so that wee see not, but at least in some persons and at some places and times it might probably bee offensive and scandalous so to practise.

2 Wee looked not onely to the offence of those in your owne congregations, but to the imboldning and hardning of Papists in honouring any part of their portuises, above the formes of other reformed Churches abroad; and you cannot bee ignorant how many of the Lords witnesses now asleepe have testified of the offence and danger thereof.

Reply. 2 *You say if the booke were an Idolothyte, yet latent offence doth not oblige.*

Answ. The offence in this season, and as all things stand, cannot bee latent, complaint is made of the offence taken by many, and therefore it is evident.

Reply. 3 *The booke so farre as it is sound and good (by your confession) is no Idolothyte, nor taken out of the Masse booke, in such sense as you object:*

but

but rather the Masse and other prayers added to it; Popery is a scab cleaving to the Church, and many truths belonging to the Church, as her proper Legacy, were stolne, and heaped together in that Denne; And why the true man may not challenge his goods where ever hee finde them, or the theefe plead title to the true mans goods by prescription wee know not.

First, wee judge the whole booke an Idolothyte, and whence you gather, that wee confesse the contrary of any part of it, as it stands apart in relation to that whole, wee know not. *Answ.*

Secondly, that it was taken out of the Masse booke, was proved by the confession of King *Edward*; and other evidences are many; but you say, not in such sense as wee object. But rather, *è contra Masse, &c.* added to it, &c. But where to finde such a legacy bequeathed to the Church in the Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, wee could never yet see: So that wee rather feare all those formes of prayer, of marriage, burialls, visitations of the sick, confirmation, &c. are rather the copper counterfeit coyne, of a well growne Antichrist, whereby he cousened the Churches, when hee stole away the golden Legacy of Christ, rather then any part of the true Churches Legacy: and therefore it had been more happy for the Churches that they had never challenged the same, but let the theeves prescription to have been a good plea to hold them still: this further we adde, when we say it was taken out of the Masse-booke, wee understand Masse-booke in a large sense, (as it is commonly taken) for to speake narrowly it was collected out of three Popish bookes, the first part of publique Prayer, *ex breviario*; the second part, *viz.* the order of administring Sacraments, Matrimony, visiting the sick and burialls, *è Rituali*; 3. the order of consecration in the Supper, the Epistles and Gospels, and Collects, *è Missali*, as the forme of consecration of Bishops and Priests was taken *è Pontificali*, as the Author of *Altare Damasc.* shews, pag. 612.

Thirdly, because those words, Popery is a scab, &c. may bee a seed of much evill, an Egge out of which a Serpent may bee hatched, if men zealous of mouldy formes may but have time againe to set upon it, if the wheele of these evill times, (through Gods judgement on this wanton age) turne the Prelates or other zelotes for this Liturgie uppermost, wee shall therefore crave libertie to examine this speech more narrowly. And because (as it is said) *unumquodque ex suâ origine rectissimè judicatur*, wee shall trace the steps of the first times and so downeward, to see what sound

ſound parts of Liturgie there was, on which this ſcab is ſuppoſed to grow.

1. Our bleſſed Saviour taught his Diſciples a bleſſed forme, which though it may bee lawfully and comfortably uſed, the rather, not being of mans, but the Lords compoſing: yet it is evident hee never appointed his people to uſe it as their onely forme, and therefore the Apoſtles in the primitive Church, in that heavenly prayer, *Acts* 4. did not attend to the words and forme of this prayer, though they might have this in their eye, as the comon rule and direction how to powre out their prayers to God, for particular things, which may be an everlaſting witneſſe againſt their uſurpations, that will limit the Churches to their formes which the Lord Chriſt would not doe to his owne.

2. In the firſt 300. yeeres after Chriſt, wee read of few formes, that the Churches uſed, and thoſe rather ſhort ejaculations, then ſet formes, but contrarily wee read frequently of the exerciſe of their gifts in prayer. They prayed *ſine monitore, quia de pectore*, ſaith *Tertullian*, *i.e.* They prayed without a Promptour, becauſe from the heart, which as *Zephirus* obſerves was in oppoſition to the prompted formes then in uſe amongſt the Pagans. Wee read alſo *what* they prayed for, *viz. pro inimicis, pro imperatoribus, pro ſtatu ſeculi. pro mora finis*, &c. but of any ſet formes we read not. Their perſecutions and dayes of afflictions preſerved them from formalitie in prayer, and taught them how to finde their hearts and knees, and tongues, to poure out their ſoules to God, while under the Altar they were pouring out their blood.

Tertull. Apol. cap. 30.

3. But after the Churches had enjoyed peace for ſome ſpace of time, (wherein ſecuritie uſually makes inſenſible, and inſenſibleneſſe formall) then indeed wee read of ſet and impoſed formes, which the rather prevailed in regard of the groſſe and palpable ignorance of a blind miniſtry, under a more learned Prelacy, and therefore it is well obſerved by *Chemnitius* that the third Councell of Carthage decreed this; *ut nemo in precibus*, &c. *viz.* that no Miniſter in his prayers either names the Father for the Sonne or the Sonne for the Father, but when hee comes to the Altar, to direct his prayers alwayes to God the Father, and that no man uſe his owne formes, till hee have conferred and ſhewed his formes to men more able, which wee finde ſometime to bee the Synod.

4. After

4 After theſe times they added the commemoration of Saints to their Prayers and Letanies, as appears from manifold inſtances, whereof take but this one imputed to *Chryſoſtome: Sanctiſſimæ Deiparæ & ſemper Virginis Mariæ, cum omnibus ſanctis, memoriam agentes, nos ipſos & omnem vitam noſtram Chriſto Deo noſtro commendamus.* Which Letanies at firſt being uſed more ſeldome at ſome times of the year, afterwards grew into ordinary uſe, to every end of which the people added, Lord have mercy upon us, and *Exaudi Domine*, We beſeech thee to hear us good Lord. *Vid. Chemnit. Ex. de Innoc. Sanctorum.*

5 From commemoration of Saints, (being ſo near the brink) they ſoon came on to invocation of them, firſt in private prayer, then in publick, and that by degrees. For firſt, they called upon Chriſt to hear their interceſſions for them. *Interceſſionibus Sanctorum tuorum, Salvator, ſalva nos:* and thence they fell to direct and immediate invocation of them. *Maria Deo ſupplica, ut animas noſtras ſalvet.*

6 At laſt they became ſo ſuperſtitious in their Letanies or Liturgies, that praying was magnified above all preaching, and almoſt all preaching was changed into formall, corrupt, and blind praying; and thus it was generally in the Churches, till about the ſixt Century, as (if need were) might be ſhewed at large.

7 Though other Churches were thus over-grown with Forms of Worſhip, yet the *Roman* Biſhops eſpecially, did multiply Forms and ſuperſtitious Rites exceſſively. *Rome* being (in Gods ſecret Providence) left to become the very ſeat and throne of Antichriſt. The Biſhops themſelves alſo finding it exceeding hard to bring in the Religion of Chriſt, without conforming to the Pagan rites, as *Caſaubon* obſerves. For it appears even in the time of *Theodoſius*, wherein Chriſtianity was riſen to a great head, the Senate being ſent unto by him to renounce their Pagan Religion, and receive the law of Chriſt, they returned anſwer that they would not, but that they would obſerve the ancient law *Pompilian*, to avoid the ruine of the Common-wealth, which they feared might come by the change of Religion. The *Roman* Biſhops alſo for 400 years together, could never obtain of the Senate, nor multitudes of the *Roman* Idolaters, to renounce their inveterate Idolatry, and receive the Goſpel. Hence they conformed their Rites and Ceremonies to the Pagan and Idolatrous cuſtomes, the better to allure them to Chriſt according to their carnall po- *Vid.* Birth of Hereſies, out of *Elaſopolitans Comment.*

licy. We finde all the principal parts of the Masse to be borrowed from the Idolatrous Pagans, and to have their originall from *Numa Pompilius* that Conjurer, who lived 700 years before Christ, to adorn and deck (as the Bishops thought) the Religion of Christ Jesus, to the which with much ado at last the *Romans* were converted. To which principall parts, *viz.* Vestments, Holy-water, the Confiteor, Organs, Incense, Offertory, &c. other deckings were added also, as divers Letanies, and the Kurie Elyson to be sung nine times, invented by *Gregory* a Monk at first, well studied in the laws of *Numa* and *Tullus Hostilius*: *Damasus* (as *Platina* and *Sabellius* shew) inriched it with *Gloria Patri, &c. i.e.* Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Sergius*, with an *Agnus Dei*, to be sung three times. *Alexander* and other Bishops added the Canon of the Masse; others, the Epistles and Gospels: The Graduall and Collects were added by *Gelasius*, *anno* 493. The *Gloria in excelsis* by *Symmachus* 508. At last came the Host in about 1062. Much more might be said. All which when we consider, we confess we are pusled to discern the difference between the sound part and the scab. For if the principal formalities of the Masse (out of which our Liturgy was taken; as is confessed) arose out of a politick push to conform the Christian to the Pagan Religion, and the deckings of it, from the itching humor of the *Roman* busie Bishops, admirers of humane inventions and Ceremonies; let the Reader then judge what sound parts are left beside the scab. We do not speak this to condemn every thing for the matter of it that is in the Common-Prayer-book: Yea, we honor the affection and piety of the first Reformers, and the godly then, that were glad to hear Prayers in their own tongue, and according to the glimmering light of those times, aymed at the winning of Papists to the true Religion by such a Form of Worship. But now since experience hath taught, it rather hardens them against the truth, then draws them toward it; when we see the pressing of it is rather a temptation to conform to Popery, then otherwise; we verily beleeve, if they had lived in these times of further light, they would have born witnesse against it, as others have done.

Lastly, though the originall had been good (which yet is contrary) we may answer in the words of *Peter Martyr*, to such as did plead for a lawfull presence at Masse, because the originall was good; who answers thus: *In hisce rebus non origo, &c.* In

Pet. Mart. loc. com. de Idol.

these

theſe matters, not the Originall, but the Nature is to be conſidered; for the braſen Serpent had its originall from God, and was honored with miraculous works: yet when abuſed, *Piis hominibus redditus eſt deteſtabilis*, it became (moſt) loathſome to godly men.

Reply. *It is no hard task to ſhew, that our Service-book was reformed in moſt things, according to the pureſt Liturgies which were in uſe in the Church, long before the Maſſe was heard of in the world. And if that could not be ſhewed, yet forms of ſpeech generally taken (we ſpeak not of this or that ſpeciall word or phraſe) is no more defiled by Idolatry, then the light, air, or place where Idolatry is committed, &c.*

Anſw. It is juſt cauſe of grief unto us, that this reverend Author ſhould thus uſe the Prelates plea for Surplice aud other Ceremonies, to juſtifie this corrupt Liturgy; for theſe were before the Maſſe, and many other Idols of the Papiſts: and though a phraſe or word be not polluted by their uſe of it; yet a needleſs Ceremony, and ſo a deviſed Form of Worſhip, and a bundle of Ceremonious and corrupt Words, muſt needs be polluted by the uſe of them; better to uſe the Forms of Turks then Papiſts, ſaith *Cartw. ſupra.*

Reply. Fourthly, *put caſe the Miniſter in reading give offence, give unlawfull honor to a thing abuſed to Idolatry, and ſuffer himſelf to be ſinfully limited in reading? what is that to the faithfull? This can be no ground that the people may not joyn, &c.*

Anſw. We doe not conclude that they doe ſin, but fearfull we are leſt they may ſo do; all things conſidered in this caſe, as have been before propounded. If indeed the caſe ſtood as formerly it hath done in *England*, we would have been leſſe ſcrupulous and doubtfull of the matter: but if by the out-breaking of light, after ſo long toleration of the book, we ſee ſo many evill effects of it, and ſee ſuch ſuperſtitious opinions of it increaſing, and ſuch preſſing the ſame to the oppreſſion of the Churches, ſo many fall, ſo many weak ones ſtagger, and look at the example of their Guides: if now when all are called of God to riſe up againſt it with zeal and deteſtation, a Miniſter godly and able will uſe any part of it with offence, &c. we ſuppoſe we had cauſe to fear and leave it doubtfull, whether the godly might lawfully joyn with them therein, and therefore we deſire you to call back your ſharp cenſure of ſuch withdrawing, as you conclude this paſſage withall, or elſe we ſhal appeal to the reverend Aſſembly of Miniſters, and their late and godly Directory herein.

Reply. Fifthly, *If these, and such like scruples make it unlawfull to joyn in the ordinance of Worship, we must hold communion with no society under heaven. For may not the brethren which hold all stinted Liturgies and set Forms unlawfull, say with like reason, it is not lawfull to joyn with others in conceived Prayers, if they give too little honor to it, as conceiving the other lawful, or sinfully limiting themselves to one stinted Form, though conceived at first by themselves, &c.*

Answ. We must intreat the Christian Reader still to carry in minde with what tenderneſſe we offered our selves in this point, and upon what considerations we durst not wholly excuse and cleare such joyning as the case now stood, and therefore we think these reasonings would be far differing from the case in hand, and we would not be taken so as to justifie such rigid principles as these are. We heartily joyn in the conclusion, that such advancing of small differences, would indeed bring all to confusion, and we are far (we hope) from any such meaning. If our answer in this or any other passage, give just advantage to such separations, we are heartily sorry for it; but we hope what hath been said will satisfie the ingenuous and Christian Reader.

Reply. Sixthly, *we have credibly heard, that you hold fellowship with professed rigid separatists, without acknowledging of their error, and receive them as members, or communicate with them in the priviledges of the Church, though you professe you approve not their opinion or practice: and if in godly wisdome you can see grounds to joyn with them, we marvail you should be so timerous in this particular.*

Answ. Although in many of our Churches we know not that there be any such professed rigid Separatists, that reject the Churches of *England*, as no Churches; and their Ministers, as no true Ministers; yet we deny not but some such there may bee in some of the Churches. Whence we grant it may follow that we can have communion in Gods Worship with men of severall judgments, yet we may be justly timerous of joyning or approving others to joyn in any part of a corrupt Worship, in case of scandall, &c. we think these things have not the same face or shew of reason in them; and therefore so long as they live peaceably with us, we can well have fellowship with them, as we have also with other, that think (it may be) better of the Churches and wayes of it, then there is cause, in regard of the corruptions thereof; so we be not bound to approve their opinions, nor conform to any of their corrupt practises.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, *if to administer in a stinted Form be scandalous to such as separate, it is scandall taken, not given; and we should do it the rather, that they be not confirmed in their error, the truth be not prejudiced, needless scruples occasioned, &c.* Reply.

1 This is from the question, for we dispute of your Liturgy, not of any Liturgy or stinted Form. Answ.

2 Take in the case in all its circumstances, (as before declared) and it will appear scandall may be given; at least we put the case of a scandall really given.

3 How far a man in some cases of clear and undoubted truths may do a thing, the rather for such reasons, though others take offence, we will not dispute: but if for meat (or by use of our liberty by eating of such meat, as another accounts unclean) we may destroy the work of God, and therefore must not eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor any thing whereby a brother stumble, &c. *Rom.* 14 14,15,20,21. how dangerous then to use such corrupt Forms of Worship, or any part thereof, so much the rather, when a weak brother stumbles at them, we leave it to the Christian Reader to judge, we doubt it will not agree with the rules of charity prescribed *Rom.* 14. 1 *Cor.* 8.

CHAP. III.

3 Position.

That the children of godly and approved Christians are not to be baptized, untill their Parents be set members of some particular Congregation.

4 *That the Parents themselves, though of approved piety, are not to be received to the Lords-supper, untill they be admitted as set members.*

WHat is here premised to prevent mistakes, doth seem more to raise, then to abate scruples. You refuse not all communion with all that are not Church-members, and so much they professe who formerly have gone for, and professed themselves Separatists from our assemblies; you doe not appropriate these priviledges of the seals onely to members of your own Churches, &c. If you mean onely that the Sacraments administred in other Churches be true for substance; it is no more then you will confesse of Rome. *If you deny not fellowship with them in the seals, and* Reply.

to receive them to the Sacrament, your judgement is against your practise, or you exclude the Churches of England *from the number of true Churches.*

Answ. We see not how such scruples could be raised without great mistake of our meaning, our expressions were so plain and distinct. For,

1 What if some Separatists admit private communion with such, yet they reject your Churches and Ministery as null, which we doe not. And many of them have refused also such private communion.

2 We marvail how you could fall into such a mistake, as to suppose we onely allow the truth of Sacraments for substance in other Churches, when we speak in the same sentence of receiving satisfaction by Letters, or otherwise concerning those we admit to the seales; which plainly shew we speak of communion with such Churches.

3 Concerning fellowship with those Churches, we may admit members of them to the seales with us, when we cannot always joyn with them in their administrations, by reason of some sinfull corruptions, wherein we must have actuall fellowship with them; as your selves would not joyn, in case you must kneel at the Lords-supper.

4 Concerning the Dilemma. We answer; 1 Our practice is not crosse to this profession. For such as come recommended from forein Churches, and give such satisfaction as is meet, we doe receive; and such as have wholly cast off all relation to English Churches, and live amongst us, we have looked at as scattered stones, till they joyn some where in a Church; and themselves generally so judge of themselves; but if any will hold to their membership in *England*, and come orderly to communion with us, we have not, nor shall not under that notion refuse them, if they be fit for the ordinances; and therefore we exclude not the English Churches out of the number, and herein we deal no otherwise with them, then with the members of our owne Churches.

Reply. *All possible care to keep the ordinances of God from contempt, we allow and commend, so you deny not Church priviledges, to whom they are due, nor the name of Churches to such as God hath blessed with meanes of grace, and have received the Tables and Seales, and entred Covenant with God. Your liberty to receive such satisfaction as is*

meet,

meet, is not questioned, nor whether you are to keep the bond of the spirit inviolable according to order: but whether this be according to order, to exclude from the Sacrament true visible Christians, or known recommended Christians, formerly members of visible Churches amongst us, and their children; and to put such difference between them, and such as are in your Church order.

Answ. 1 If the learned Author would hold to what here is granted, we hope this controversie would soon be at an issue; but it will appear after this order allowed binds onely in case of the Ministers to dispense Sacraments, but Christians are left at a loose end, in respect of combining themselves unto particular Churches according to the order of Christ, which is the thing wee plead for.

2 We have not denyed the name of Churches to such as are said to have plentifully the means of grace, Tables, Seales, and Covenant.

3 Concerning the stating of the question, too much liberty is taken, as in other cases; for neither in the Position, or in our Answer, doe we limit the question to members in our Church order, (as here it is called) but expresly extend the same to other Churches of Christ, though through error or humane frailty, defective in matters of order, yea, to the members of any true Church, as in the Answer is said. 2. Concerning such as come over, and are for a time without Seales, it is not because we refuse communion with them, as being members of your Churches known, or recommended Christians, as you say. For if any godly man remaining a member in any true Church with you, or elswhere, come so recommended, or be well known to the Church, we never under that notion refuse any, but giving such other satisfaction as is meet, shall readily receive them, as we always professe, and therefore we must still call for attendance to the state of this question in its right terms, *viz.* whether the children of godly parents, or themselves though of approved piety, are to be admitted to the seales, not being members of some particular Congregation, or untill they be such.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Reply. *TO the first consideration: If by the Church be understood the society of men professing the entire faith, the seales are given to it, as peculiar priviledges, but if you understand a Congregationall assembly; the seales were never appropriated to it.*

Answ. 1 Our meaning is plain in the second sense, as may appear by the reasons alledged against any such universall Church, as instituted and politicall, wherein the seales are dispensed, which reasons you answer not, but grant there is no such Catholick Church in our sense, *pag.* 21. And if no such Church wherein the seales are administred, as we proved, then the cause it self is yeelded, and the seales must belong to particular Churches.

2 Seeing the main hinge of this question turns upon this point, to what Church the administration and participation of the seals belong, wee shall a little further open our selves in this point. And because we affect and study peace with truth; we shall freely acknowledge,

First, that as there is an invisible Church and Body of Christ, consisting of all the elect, effectually called throughout the world in all ages of it, the whole family in heaven and earth: so unto Jesus Christ, all the visible beleevers and Churches of the world, are as one body to him, he governing, protecting, instructing all as his visible body.

Secondly, we acknowledge a visible communion of all the true Churches of the Lord Jesus, in all offices of brotherly love, and in the holy things of Christ, so far as may appear, the Lord have ordained and commanded, and by his Providence called them to exercise one with another.

Thirdly, we grant that all true beleevers, where-ever they bee, have by faith in Christ, a true right and interest unto Jesus Christ and all his benefits, whatsoever he hath purchased for them; but here we must first distinguish of these benefits of Christ, whereof some are meerly spirituall, inward, and flowing immediately from Christ unto them; and therefore peculiar to true beleevers, as justification, sanctification, adoption, accesse to God in prayer, &c. some are outward and tending to the help and furtherance of our spirituall communion with Christ, being outward and visible meanes thereof; and therefore are also extended to

hypocrites

hypocrites being visible beleevers, as the Ministery of the Word, Seals, Church-discipline, &c. And these cannot be dispensed by Christ immediately nor ordinarily, but by means of a visible Church. 2. We distinguish of right to these outward benefits of Christ; which is either remote, called, *jus ad rem*; or near, and immediate, called, *jus in re*; right to the enjoyment and fruition of it. Now in the first sense we grant, all visible beleevers have a right to seals, &c. But the immediate fruition of them, they must have *mediante Ecclesiâ visibili*: now here lyes the true state of the question, Whether the Lord Jesus have ordained an universall visible Church, in which, and unto which, by the Officers thereof all these outward visible priviledges and means of Grace, are to be dispensed and immediately enjoyed of the faithfull; or whether (not the remote right, but) the immediate fruition and administration of all these ordinances by the institution of Christ, be given to particular visible Churches; and surely to whom one of these is given, all are given: For there is the same nature, reason, and use of all, Ministry of the Word, Seals, Discipline, all are outward ordinances, priviledges, means of Grace, belonging to the visible Church, where Christ hath given one, he hath given all. But we must confesse, however you call this, A new Church way, it is new to us to read so much of late, of such a Catholick Church, to which administration of Seals, Censures, &c. belong. We are yet of the opinion of *Baynes*, *Parker*, and *Cartwright*, *&c.* that have against Papists and Prelates maintained, that in the new Testament there is no *instituted* Catholick, Nationall, or Provinciall Church; but onely the Church of a particular Congregation, both for the reasons alledged in our Answer, as also for the impossibility thereof in the dayes of the New Testament, when the Lord Jesus sent his Apostles into all the world; therefore impossible both in regard of distance of place, and variety of language almost ever to meet in one, so much as by representation, and that not onely by accident, as may befall a particular Church, by sickness, persecution, &c. but by the necessity of nature and invincible hinderances foreseen by Christ, and intended by him. And therfore, as the Lord limiting his Church to one Nation, united it into that form of a Nationall Church, ordaining one place, stated times and duties of Worship, and one Government for the same: so now the Lord neglecting all such things, hath ordained a compleat administration

niſtration of all his ordinances in particular Congregations, and therefore if there be no other inſtituted viſible Church but of a Congregation, and Seals in their adminiſtration be given to the Church, our firſt conſideration will ſtill hold firm. But ſeeing in ſo vaſt a ſubject to ſay little, is to ſay nothing; and there is ſcarce any Truth in this wilie age but is almoſt diſputed out of countenance, and much darkned with humane evaſions; and ſeeing much depends upon this controverſie, it may be ſo moſt uſefull before we come to the defence of our argument to take into conſideration the nature and order of the viſible Church of Chriſt Catholick and particular. We are not ignorant of the knots and difficulties of this queſtion, which of late have ſo much exerciſed the minds of many Godly-learned: And we think the notions of a Catholick Church, as it is now held, being but newly taken up amongſt godly Reformers, who formerly ran in another channell, (as is ingenuouſly confeſſed by ſome according to the truth) this new-birth ſeems not yet ſo formed to its diſtinct proportions, as time may bring it unto: and it might make us afraid (being the weakeſt of many) to venture upon ſo diffuſe and knotty a queſtion, when we look upon our own inſufficiency to ſuch a task, and the Learned labors of ſuch in this Point, whom we reverence in the Lord: yet, when we conſider of what great weight and moment the clearing up of this Truth would be unto the orderly proceedings of the great Work of Reformation in hand; 2 How unavoydably it lyes in our way in this Work the Lord hath called us unto; and that he ſometimes doth vouchſafe to ſpeak by weak ones, that the praiſe may be his own, in hope of his bleſſed guidance which we depend upon herein, taking the light of his Word in our hands, we ſhall (rather as learners then otherwiſe) venture to propound what is ſuggeſted to us herein. Concerning which having digreſſed a while, we ſhall return (we hope) with ſome advantage of clearer evidence to juſtifie the firſt argument of the Anſwer, againſt what is ſaid in the Reply.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A digression tending to clear the state of that controversie concerning a Catholick visible Church, in respect of the nature, unity, visibility, and priority of the same.

THe world hath been long troubled with the equivocation of the word [Church:] and therefore (as it is needfull) we shall labor to set down our thoughts as distinctly and plainly as we can in certain Propositions that may be some ground of our discourse.

The true Church of God is the whole number of Elect and called ones out of the world to fellowship with Jesus Christ their Head, with whom they make up one mysticall body, *Ephes.* 1.23. This whole Church is of the same nature, and one in essence from the beginning of the world to the end; for this Church Christ laid down his life, *Ephes.* 5.26. *Joh.* 10.15. and therefore he adds, *vers.* 16. such as are not yet of his fold (actually) shall be brought into the same, *viz.* by effectuall calling, that there may be one Shepheard and one sheepfold: wherby it appears that the whole fold of Christ to which he stands as one Shepheard, contains all his members and sheep to the end of the world, and it is one fold in relation to Christ that one Shepheard. *Propos.* 1.

This one entire body of Christ doth naturally fall under various notions and considerations, as (omitting others) when it is considered according to the adjuncts of visibility and invisibility, which are onely adjuncts of the same Church, as is generally observed by Divines. In respect of the inward union which every such member hath with Christ the Head, by the Spirit of Christ, and by Faith, whereby we are united to him; it is called invisible, because this union is not visible to men. In respects of some visible fruits and manifestations of faith to the judgment of men, it is called visible; and hence though true beleevers be onely *univoce*, and properly members of this body of Christ; yet to men that judge onely by outward effects many hypocrites, *equivoce* and improperly are accounted of the Church; and hence the Scripture frequently speaks of visible Churches, as if they were all really Saints. *Propos.* 2. *Whit. de Eccles.*

Propos. 3. As this Church comes to be visible, so it becomes a fit and capable subject of visible policy, and visible communion with Christ their Head, and one with another in all the visible ordinances of Christ, a capable subject we say, or matter fit for such a state; for by its visibility it self it is not so, having yet no more then a spirituall relation to Christ and one another: no visible combination one with another; for visible beleevers may be so scattered in severall Countreys, that they cannot make up one Society.

Propos. 4. And therefore we add, That there is no way for this Church to enjoy actuall visible communion under the visible government of Christ, and in the visible instituted ordinances of Christ, but in a Society. A thousand uncombined persons meeting occasionally in one place, though their naturall relations were as near as brethren, yet have no power of government or actuall communion in any Civill priviledges, if they stand not in relation to one another as a combined Society; as after shall be shown; so here: And therefore, *Acts* 2.41,42. first they were added to the Church, and then followed their fellowship in all the ordinances of the Church; as after will more fully appear. And hence it is said, *Acts* 5.14. *Beleevers* were added; first they were beleevers, standing in that spirituall relation to Christ and his whole body, and then added to the Church by visible combination.

Propos. 5. There is no visible society of a Church who hath actuall and immediate right unto, and communion in the visible government of Christ, and the dispensation of his instituted Worship and ordinances, but such a Society as the Lord Jesus hath in the Gospel instituted and ordained for that end. We say actuall and immediate right unto the same; for though a beleever, *quâ* beleever, have an immediate right, and actuall enjoyment of such benefits of Christ as necessarily and immediately flow from his internall union with Christ, as justification, adoption, &c. and such right to Christian communion with all the Saints in their prayers, gifts, &c. as flow from his spirituall relation unto them; yea, and also he hath a true right to all benefits purchased by Christ in a due order and manner: yet we say *instituted* priviledges and ordinances doe not immediately flow from spirituall union and relation to Christ and his members, but are dispensed by Christ to his people mediately, and in such an order as he hath in wisdome ordained:

ordained: and this the nature of visible government and ordinances of Christ necessarily requires. And hence it is, that although the Church in its nature and essence, and in respect of its spirituall union and relation to Christ and one another, profession of the same faith, &c. have been always one and the same in all ages, yet both the visible government and ordinances of Worship, and also the instituted form and order of Church-societies hath been various according to the wisdome and will of Christ, whereby it appears, that the order, government, forms of visible Church-societies, to which actuall enjoyment of visible ordinances doe belong, cannot justly be deduced from the common nature of the Church Cathoilck, or any respects of reason or logicall notions under which it may fall: but onely this depends upon the will and pleasure of Christ, who hath in all ages instituted the forms and orders of such Societies to whom the actual enjoyment of instituted ordinances was given: And hence the argument for a nationall form of a Church to be in the New Testament as wel as in the Old, drawn from the common nature, essence, profession of faith, &c. of the Church in all ages, falls flat to the ground, for by the same reason it must then be in families onely now, as it was about *Abrahams* time.

Hence it follows that the true state of this great dispute about a Catholick Church (so far as tends to clear up to what Church the actuall administration of Church-government, and all instituted Worship belongs) doth not lye in the consideration of the common nature, essence, unity, visibility, or any other notions under which it may fall; but the true state lyes here concerning the nature, order, form of such visible Societies, as Christ Jesus by Divine institution in the Gospel hath reduced his visible members unto, for the actuall and immediate enjoyment of all his instituted ordinances. *Propos. 6.*

And therefore (with due respect to the Godly-learned be it spoken) we conceive many large disputes in this question fall short of the issue that is desired and intended; for what if it be granted: 1 That there is a Catholick visible Church, which in some respects of reason (as Mr. *Ball* saith) is one that having *partes visibiles*, is a *totum visibile*.

2 That the visible Church is not onely a *totum genericum*, in relation to all the particular Congregations, as *species specialissima*,

of a visible Church in generall, (which respect of reason in some sense we freely consent unto) but also that it may fall under the notion of a *totum integrale*, as some contend, (though we conceive in this notion, they are so intangled in their own logicall principles, as that they cannot get out without breaking them, and flying to theologicall considerations) yet we say, what if that also be attained?

3 Yea further, what if this Catholick Church be in some respects of reason and order of nature also the first Church, and particular Churches, *ortæ*?

4 Yea further, what if it were gained also by such disputes, that the Keys and Officers, Ordinances, &c. be given firstly to this Catholick Church as to the object and end? We confesse we do not see that what our Brethren contend for, is by all this obtained. For, first, if the universall number of visible beleevers be one *totum aggregatum*; yet it will bee hard to prove that these are one instituted and politicall Society, that can enjoy visible communion together in visible Worship and government; and yet more hard to prove that by the institution of Christ, these all are to be actually governed as one *totum*.

Secondly, what though the members of the Church Catholick be in order of time before particular Churches, as being fit matter for them, and constituting of them? yet this proves not one politicall body before they combine, but rather the contrary.

Thirdly, be it so that this Catholick Church is the first Church to which Christ hath firstly given the Keys, Ordinances, Promises, &c. for which Christ firstly performed the Offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, and what else soever can be said in this kinde; yet all this may be in this respect that Christ looked at this Catholick Church firstly as the chief object and end for whose sake and good he ordained and gave all these things, and this will not carry the cause; for as the Church Catholick visible in this sense is the first Church in respect of the particulars, so the invisible body of Christ is in nature and priority the first Church in respect of visible, as visible; for Christ no doubt firstly intends and gives all these things to the invisible Church, as to the object and end of the same for whose good they are all ordained; rather then for the Catholick visible Church, which containes many hypocrites and reprobates within the verge of it. But now if we speak of a subject of the Keys, to which the actuall exercise and dispensation

of

of Keys and instituted Ordinances belong: who doe not see that in this sense the invisible Church *quâ talis*, cannot be that instituted Society to which the Keys,&c. belong; and by the same reason the Catholick visible Church *quâ totum*, and *quâ* Catholick, cannot be this instituted Society to which they are given. It is a known rule in Reason, that, That which is first in intention, is last in execution; and so it is here, first, Christ propounds this end to himself to gather, edifie, perfect, sanctifie, save his Catholick Church, *Ephes.*4.11,12. & 5.26. and therefore institutes all ordinances as means to farther and attain this great design; but in execution he may (for all this) give the Keys and ordinances in regard of the immediate exercise to any form of visible Societies that he shall be pleased to institute, and it may be that will prove the least Society sooner then a greater.

And seeing our Brethren otherwise minded make much use of similies in this dispute: we hope it will not be amisse for us to illustrate what we say by a similitude, partly to make our conceivings the more plain to all whose edification we seek; and partly, to discover the invalidity of many discourses of this nature; and because *similia arguunt fidemq; faciunt*, (as he saith) *viz.* so far as rightly applyed) we will therefore propound it in way of argument. The similitude is this, *genus humanum*, or mankinde in generall is the subject of Civill government in generall, and of all the priviledges thereof, as the object and the end: and let the question be, whether this Catholick number of all mankinde is the first subject of all power of Civill government, and the priviledges thereof; and if so, whether such consequences will follow as our Brethren deduce from the unity, visibility, and priority of the Catholich Church. Now we reduce what we intend into an Argument, thus: If all that can be said from Scripture and Reason concerning the unity, visibility, and priority of the Catholick Church, may as truly be affirmed upon like grounds of the Catholick body of mankinde, then *à pari* it will follow that there is no more one Catholick visible instituted *totum*, that is the first subject of Church power and priviledges in the actuall exercise and enjoyment of the same, then that there is such a Catholick body of mankinde that is the first subject of Civill power, &c. and that actually doth or ought to govern and be governed as one Catholick body in communion: but it will appear from Scripture and Reason, that the same things may be said of mankind that can be said of the other; *Ergo*. 1 Cor. 15.47.

And

And it is proved *per partes*, thus: 1 *For the unity*; are not all mankinde oft in Scripture called the world? *Joh.* 3.16. *So God loved the world*, that is, mankinde in the world; which is one. So, frequently all mankinde is called man, *Gen.*6.5,6,7. *I will not strive with man, &c.* yea, it is one kingdom, *Psal.*145.11,12,13. which (if we view the whole Psalm) must be understood of the generall government of Gods providence over all the world, and especially mankinde therein, 1 *Chron.*29.11,12. *&c.* so that all is one kingdom, *Acts* 17. 26. *God hath made of one blood all Nations*; all are one blood, all have their bounds set by God, &c. that they might seek him, and feel after him; and as it is said for one Catholick Church, because it hath one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Spirit, and are bound to love and pray one for the other, &c. so there is a like unity here, for the whole number of mankinde hath one Lord and King over all, *God who is King over all the earth called an head over all*, 1 *Chron.*29.11. yea, Jesus Christ is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, and head over all to the Church, *Ephes.*1.22. *All have one Law*, the Morall Law, the common rule of equity and righteousnes whereby they are bound to walk towards God and one another, and this writ in the hearts of all; they have all one spirit of reason disposing them to society and mutuall offices of love, one faculty of speaking to fit them for communion, one end to feel after God, *Act.* 17. and seek ye good of the whole kinde; all ought to love one another, desire and seek the welfare of the whole, and of one another, *Esay* 58.7. yea, the Lord as a common head by the working of his common Providence, and out of his love of mankinde, hath a common and constant influence into all, giving not onely life and breath, and all good things, *Acts* 17. but also all gifts of wisdom, art, skill, for Government, &c. to Kings, Judges, Fathers, Masters, and all Officers of Civill government, for the good of the whole; and what ever else may be said to prove the Catholick Church *One*, may here be applyed.

And as for principles of reason, it is easie to conceive that all mankinde will fall either under the notion of one *genus homo*, whereof the *individua* are *species specialissimæ*, or in another respect all persons, all Families, Cities, Kingdomes may (in a sense) make one *totum integrale*, or *aggregatum*.

Secondly, it is as evident that all this number of mankinde are one *visibile totum*, by the arguments used for the visible Catholick Church,

Church, for that which hath visible parts, is a visible *totum*, it holds here as well as in the other case. Yea, if the Catholick Church be one visible Body, because it hath organs and visible Officers in it, it will hold here, for all mankinde is but one Army of the Lord of Hosts, who hath Armies of heaven, and Armies on earth, and in this Body God by his Providence hath set, and by his ordinance hath ordained Fathers, Masters, Husbands, Judges, Kings, &c. to govern in this Body of mankinde for the good of the whole. Ruling and subjection by the fifth Commandement of the Morall Law, which is in all mens hearts, is ordained of God for the order, peace, and welfare of all mankind, and therefore why is not this by the same reason a *totum visibile*?

Thirdly, for *Priority*, it is clear, that as God hath firstly in nature and intention given Christ to the whole Church, then to this and that particular beleever, and the power of feeding and being fed and governed by shepheards. First, to the whole race of sheep. Secondly, to this or that flock. So in nature and Gods intention he hath firstly given to the race of mankind power of being governed with Government and Governors, before they are given to this or that Family, City, Kingdom, &c. So likewise what is said of Promises, given to the Church Catholick firstly; is it not as true here? Those promises and blessings increase and multiply, Subdue the earth and inhabite it. The feare and dread of you shall be on all beasts: and all like promises and priviledges of marriage, of liberty to eat flesh, &c. mentioned, *Gen.* 2. & 9. and all over the Scripture, are they not in nature first given to mankinde? and then to this or that person, family, City? So if Church power, and all Officers and Offices be firstly given to the Catholick Church, not to this or that particular Church: So it's here, when the Scripture saith, *Submit to the higher Powers, for all Powers are of God, Rom.* 13. *By me*, saith God, *Kings reign, and Princes decree judgment*, and such like Scriptures; doth this firstly belong to this or that Kingdome, City, &c. and not rather that God hath firstly set up and ordained Civil Powers for mankind, to be obeyed of all mankinde firstly, and then in this or that state. Is foederall holinesse first the priviledge of the Catholick Church? (which in a sense we will not now contradict) so is legitimation, first the priviledge of married society in generall in all mankinde, and then of this or that family. Are the members of particular Churches firstly of the Catholick Church;

and is it not so here? the members of every family, city, &c. first and last of the number of mankinde; and so when the Societies are dissolved, they are still of mankinde: and doe not all Societies spring of mankinde, and are an additament and increase to it? the one is true as well as the other.

It would be over tedious to follow this parallel so farre as wee might, these may be sufficient instances to guide the Reader to apply whatever else is, or can be said in this kinde from the common nature and logicall notions under which the Catholick Church visible may be considered: What is said that may more properly concern the case under the notion of an instituted Society, we shall consider in due place.

Now from that which hath been said, the Conclusion, as we conceive, doth easily and naturally follow, That as notwithstanding all that is said, there is no Catholick visible Body of mankinde, to which, or to the Officers whereof is given the power and priviledges of Civill government to rule this Catholick Body, either as one *totum politicum*; or the parts of it, Families, Cities, Kingdoms *in communi*, by subordination of all Societies with reference to the whole; or so as every King, Major, &c. should be an Officer of the whole. So these, and like consequences will not follow in respect of the guides, government, priviledges, &c. of the Catholick Church, notwithstanding all that is said from these considerations of unity, visibility, priority of nature, &c.

1 *Object.* *If any shall Object, the case is not alike, because in this Catholick Church were universall Officers set up, as the Apostles; not so in the world of mankinde.*

Answ. We say, these were but for a time in the first beginning for the setting up of the first order in all the Churches; who being dead, there is none to succeed them in that respect of Catholick power.

Secondly, we say likewise, at the first for a time *Adam*, and after *Noah*, had a generall power over mankinde, though after them none had the like, as it is here. And therefore the comparison still runs clear.

2 *Object.* *If any object, as some doe, in answer to an argument somewhat like this, that this similitude holds not, because there is not that externall union of visible communion in the Common-wealths of the world, as in the Church; if one say, God hath placed Kings, Dukes in the Common-wealths,*

wealths, as in one organicall Body who have one head, who giveth influence to so many organs of head, feet, &c. as the Apostle speaketh of the Body the Church, 1 Cor. 12. then indeed all the Common-wealths of the world would make but one body.

To the Scripture alledged we shall speak after, here onely let us clear our parallel. And first take the similitude as it is stated by us, and it will be clear. First, compare the Catholick number of mankinde, with the Catholick Church, which is the number of called ones, and then there is as much externall union of visible communion in one, as in the other. For, first, all mankinde may and ought to maintain Civill communion one with another, in all Offices of humanity, for the common good of the whole, as the members of the Catholick Church doe, or ought to doe; and common humanity, and the command of the Morall Law binds thereto, as well as Christianity and rules of the Gospel bind here. *Answ.*

Secondly, if we compare Civill societies, as Families, Cities, Common-wealths with instituted Churches, it is as possible, and as well the duty of all Common-wealths in the world, by principles of humanity, and the Morall Law in all mens hearts, to maintain externall union of leagues of friendship, and communion in all Offices of Civill society, as it is possible, and the duty of all Church societies, by the principles of Christianity, and rule of the Gospel to maintain externall union of visible communion in the duties of Church society.

Thirdly, (not to dispute here whether there be such an externall union of visible communion amongst all the visible Churches, as parts of the Church Catholick) if the reason alledged be sufficient to prove the same, *viz.* because there is one head in the Church, who giveth influence to so many organs of head, feet, eyes, &c. in the Church.

Then still our parallel will hold; for as this Head is no other then Christ Jesus in his spirituall Kingdom, the Church giving that influence named; so the same Lord that is King and Head over all, 1 *Chron.* 29. 11. *Ephes.* 1. 22. doth give influence to many organs in this Body of Mankinde, even to all Kings, Judges, Fathers of Families.

And Christ is the same in respect of all authority, power, gifts, administrations Civill, &c. to this Kingdome of Men, as he is to the Kingdom of his Church of all power spiritual; And although

the Church be a Body of nearer relation to Christ, then the Body of mankinde; yet in regard of a common relation between a Head and Body there is a similitude, which is sufficient in this case.

There is one thing more we meet withall that here we shall remove, *viz.* when it is objected that the Catholick visible Church cannot be one, because it cannot convent together in one Society; it is answered usually, that such comming together in one society is not needfull, because as a Kingdom may be one, though all parts of it never meet together, having the same King, Laws, &c. And as an Army may be one, having the same Generall, the same Laws of Discipline, the same cause, &c. though the severall Brigades should never be drawn up into one body: So the Catholick Church having the same King, Laws, Cause, Enemies, is but one, though it never meet.

To this we shall here Reply so far as it lyes in our way: 1 As all union is for communion, and all communion flows from union; so look of what nature the union is, such, and no other is the communion; and look of what nature the communion ought to be, of like nature ought the union to be, else it will not reach the end. And therefore here as the mysticall spirituall union of the Catholick Church to Christ the head by faith, and to one another by love, is sufficient to afford spirituall communion with the same: So unto Politicall communion there must bee a Politicall union into one policy. And as the nature of Politicall communion is, such must the nature of the union be, that it may reach the end.

To apply this, a Politicall Church is instituted of Christ for communion in all the Worship and Ordinances of Christ instituted in the Gospel, as the Ministery of the Word, the Seales and Discipline; now no Church as *One* can have communion with Christ and one another in these things, but it must have a Politicall union suitable thereunto, that is, they must be one Society that can at least meet to combine together.

And therefore if all Churches make one Politicall Body, for Politicall communion, it must be such an union as will reach that end, which cannot be imagined in such a Catholick *totum politicum* as the Catholick Church. 'Tis true, distinct Churches (as distinct Kingdoms) may have communion in some politicall priviledges answerable to their union, consisting in a fraternall relation

relation one unto another, yet not make up one Body Politicall, of which we speak.

Secondly, to the similitudes brought, we answer, This whole Kingdom or Army is properly and clearly one Politicall Body under one Politicall head the King or General, as stands by Covenant as members of that one Policy; and those who have right to choose their King or Generall, may and doe some time or other convene. Let the like be shewed in the Catholick Church, that all Politicall Churches are moulded up into one Politicall Body, either *de jure*, or *de facto*, or that it is possible (as the case stands) so to be, and then the similitudes would be of some use.

Thirdly, in a Kingdom or Army, suppose they never meet, yet there is such politicall union as fully reaches the politicall communion for which end it was combined, *viz.* that they should enjoy peace and justice in and by a just Government, or by the protection of the Army. But if such a politicall Body were combined to have such communion as a Church-communion is, then it would require conventing together, as elsewhere we shall more fully manifest: For our parts, we do not see that Christ hath ordained the whole Catholick church as *One*, to have politicall communion together, which is impossible.

And therefore we see no need of such a Politicall combination, but as he hath ordained a Brotherly communion of counsell and helpfulnesse one to another, as need requires; so a spirituall relation and brotherly consociation of Churches together is union sufficient for such a communion.

And thus far we have endevored to take away all those arguments which are built upon the generall considerations of the unity, visibility and priority of the Catholick church, which we leave to the consideration and examination of the judicious.

We shall now, (as the Lord shall helpe us) come to cleare the state of this knotty controversie, as we think it ought to be stated and carryed. *Viz.*

What is that form of a Politicall Church which Jesus Christ in the Gospel hath instituted and appointed as the subject of Church power of government, and administration of all the ordinances of the Gospel for actuall communion with Christ, and one with another therein? And here give us leave before we enter into the question it self, to make a little further use of our former similitudes for illustration; and then we will shew where the *ne plus*

ultra, as we conceive must stand. It hath been shewed in respect of the body of mankinde, that although much may be said for the unity, visibility, and priority thereof before any parts of it, yet no reason will inforce that it is the first subject of Civill power, &c. in respect of actuall administration, and immediate enjoyment thereof, and so here in respect of the Church. We will now add but this one thing more, that notwithstanding all such reasons, yet in execution for the good of the whole, the least civill society, yea, a family may be, and is the first subject of civill power, and priviledges of civill government; so the least politicall Church society may be the first subject of these Keys of Church power in the exercise thereof, and of immediate communion in all visible ordinances, and we think that there by Divine institution it is seated, and the edification and perfection of the Catholick Church may best be attained thereby.

Concerning Families, we see no footsteps in the propagation of mankinde from *Adam* and *Noah*, of any soveraign or universall government, further then in the first Fathers of mankinde, after whom as they increased, families went out, and combining made cities, and so Common-wealths by mutuall consent, as in *Gen.*10. and other Stories appear, except by the tyrannous usurpations of some as *Nimrod*, the rest were brought under; and this no doubt amongst any free people is still the most orderly, just and safe way of erecting all forms of civill government; Families to combine into Townes, Cities, Kingdomes, or Aristocraticall States. But here some will say; If so, that according to this similitude, a particular congregation may be the first Church that have the Keys of Church power, and Church communion; then as families should combine into Towns and Cities, and they into greater Common-wealths, for the good of all mankinde; so here these first Churches may not stand independently, but ought to combine into greater Bodies, till they come to be one whole Church; to this we say, this will not follow upon this evident reason, because civill societies and government thereof, is herein left to rules of humane prudence by the Lord and governor of the whole world; and therefore may admit various forms of Government, various Laws and Constitutions, various priviledges, &c. according as men shall conceive best for themselves, so they be not against the common morall rules of equity, and the good of those Societies: but here in the Kingdom of Christ as wee

must

muſt attend what kinde of Church he hath inſtituted, ſo we muſt cleave to ſuch rules, priviledges, and forms of government and adminiſtrations as he hath ordained, not preſuming to goe one ſtep beyond the ſame. And hence it is not in the power of any Church to alienate the power, rights, or priviledges Chriſt have ſet in the ſame, or to mould up any other politicall Churches then he hath appointed; and here we conceive ſtands immovably the *ne plus ultra* of this ſimilitude between the viſible Church, and the eſtate of mankinde in reference to power and government, &c. All which things well weighed, to us ſeems to overthrow all ſuch intermediate forms of Churches, or the *uſuall* Churches, as Mr. *Ball* calls the ſame; as, Claſſicall, Provinciall, Dioceſan, Nationall, Patriarchicall, &c. which we ſee not how according to the rule of Chriſt they can be conſtituted either *deſcendendo*, from the common nature of the Catholick Church; or *aſcendendo*, from the combination of particulars, except inſtitution can bee found for the ſame. We find indeed, that ſome endevor to build ſuch forms upon the foundation of Morall principles, and the Law of nature; as, *That God hath given government to be over a multitude, and that of many Societies, as well as perſons, that one Society may not ſuffer as well as one perſon; and that therefore muſt be given of the God of grace to a ſociety and multitude of little Churches power of externall government.*

To which we anſwer; 1 That there is no ſuch principle in nature that generally binds free Societies to ſubmit to one common government; muſt many Kingdoms, &c. by conſequence all kingdoms combine in government, leſt one kingdome bee hurt, *i.* muſt *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Edom*, *Tyre*, *Sydon*, *Judea*, *&c.* being ſo contiguous in near vicinity to each other, combine in one government? 2 Is it not as ſuitable to morality and reaſon, in ſuch combinations, that they ſet up *One* to rule over them, when many grow ignorant, evill, or heady, to preſerve peace, and prevent wrong, as to ſet up many? 3 Did *Abraham*, *Lot*, *Melchiſedeck*, and ſuch family Churches, walk againſt grounds of morality and nature, that did not ſo combine? We might add more, but forbear; but we could deſire our dear Brethren to be wary of ſcattering ſuch principles; for though in the matters of the Church, and Worſhip, and Government of Chriſt, grace doth not deſtroy nature, yet look as a particular Church conſtitution and government was never erected by the Law of nature; but

Divine

Divine institution, so for the governing of many over one, why should there not be the like institution?

But to come more near to the case it self, we shall endeavour to clear two things:

1. That there is no Catholick politicall Church society instituted by Christ, to which the actuall administration and participation of Church government and communion in the instituted ordinances of Christ, is given as to the first subject thereof.

2. That the true form of all Church societies instituted by Christ, to which he hath given the actuall administration and immediate participation of Church government, and all other instituted ordinances, as the subject thereof, is onely Congregationall.

First, concerning the first, to make our discourse more distinct and plain, we shall premise here, that we doe not here at all take in, or respect that question about the power of the Keys, whether it be in the fraternity or guides, (we shall God willing have a fit place to speak something of it) but here (that we may not intermingle things) we look onely at the true subject, in which, and unto which the actuall and immediate dispensation and participation of Church government and outward ordinances is given by the institution of the Gospel. And here we first reason thus, Such a Church society as Christ instituted, the Apostles of Christ constituted and governed in: But the Apostles never constituted such a Catholick church society, or governed it in such a manner as is said: *Ergo.* The Proposition is evident, because the Apostles were to do whatsoever Christ commanded in *Matth.* 28. 20. and were sufficiently furnished with power and wisdome so to doe: Besides, the Apostles having all power from Christ as hee received from the Father, *John* 20. and the whole number of beleevers being then at the fewest, there was never since such an opportunity or possibility to constitute such a Church, if Christ Jesus had instituted such a thing. The assumption or second part of the reason is proved thus, If the Apostles ever constituted and administred in such a Church catholick, it was either that at *Jerusalem* mentioned *Acts* 1, & 2. *&c.* or that assembly that met, *Acts* 15. (for we meet with no other that can with any colour of reason bee supposed) But neither of these were such a constituted Church; *Ergo.* 1 Concerning the Church named, *Acts* 1. carryed on, *Acts* 2, *&c.* we freely grant it was a constituted Church, wherein

wherein the Apostles with Elders and Deacons afterward chosen did govern, for as it is called a Church, *Acts* 2. 47. so likewise we see there were in it elections, *Act.* 1. & 6 and administrations of instituted ordinances of worship, *Acts* 2. 41, 42. admission of members, *Chap.* 2. 41, 47. and by the same reason there might have been excommunication also: But that this Church was not the Catholick Church, we prove thus: If it were the Catholick church, then it was such either in respect of the whole essence of the Catholick church, or in respect of representation; but neither ways: *Ergo.* The first it could not be, because it consisted at the first but of 120. which was a very small part of the Catholick number of visible beleevers; for, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. there were above 500 Brethren to whom Christ appeared at once, which was but some few weeks before, besides all that in the Jewish Church were converted and baptized by *John*, which were very many; yea, if we speak of the Catholick church, properly all the Jewish Church, not yet dissolved, were part of the Catholick church of that age visible. Lastly, if it had been the Catholick church, beleevers being already of it, could not be said to be added to this; as, *Acts* 5. 13, 14. Secondly, it was not Catholick in respect of representation, for if so, then in respect of the Apostles onely as the Catholick guides, or in respect of the whole assembly with them, *Acts* 1. not the first, for then the Apostles onely should have had power to set apart *Barnabas* and *Matthias*, but it is evident that that election was by *Peter* himself committed to, and acted by the whole company called the Brethren and Disciples, *Acts* 1. 15, 16, 26. where it appears that as he spake to all, so it was concluded with the common suffrages of all.

Secondly, if so, because the Apostles were Catholick guides, then where-ever they met was a Catholick church, yea, where two or three, or any one of them was, there was the Catholick representative church, and so many such churches, for any two or one had the catholick power as well as all; *Paul* ordains, rules, and orders of discipline in all the churches, as well as if all the Apostles had met, 1 *Cor.* 7. 17. 1 *Cor.* 16. 1. 2 *That assembly* was not the representative catholick church, because, first, there were the women in the same, now women are no way capable of being messengers to represent churches: secondly, besides, these could not be representative messengers from other churches, because this was the first constituted church; we see no colour of reason

that there were any other constituted visible churches before this. Lastly, all the actions of that Church mentioned, especially those in *Acts* 2. 41,42. of admission of members, baptism, word, seales, fellowship day by day in such ordinances, choice of Deacons, &c. speak aloud against a representative Church, we should rather have heard of constitutions, censures, &c. from such a representative Catholick church of generall counsell.

Object. We are not ignorant what is said to the contrary, viz. *That it was the Catholick Church, because they elected a Catholick officer for the whole Church, viz. an Apostle.*

Ans. To which we answer; 1 All the Catholick church and guides thereof had no power so to do, no more then a particular church, being a case reserved to Christ himself, else *Pauls* argument to prove his Apostleship had not been strong; because he was not called by man, but by Christ himself, and had seen the Lord, &c. *Gal.* 1. 1. 1 *Cor.* 9. 1. 2 The act of the Church was onely a preparatory act thereunto with an after consent; the election was properly done immediately by a lot, and what was done might as well be done in the first particular Church guided by the infallible spirit of the Apostles, as by the Catholick Church it self.

Object. Secondly, it is objected, *Many of these were men of* Galilee, *which by their habitation could not pertain to the Church in* Jerusalem.

Answ. True, the Apostles and others were of *Galilee*, but they had forsaken all to follow Christ, and were commanded by Christ to remain a time at *Jerusalem*, and then to goe forth to *Samaria*, *Judea*, and the utmost parts of the earth, *Acts* 1. 4, 8. and therfore no Church relation in *Galilee* could hinder them from joyning in this first constituted Church, or give any colour that they came as members representative from any Churches in *Galilee*. And so much for the plea for a Catholick church from *Acts* 1. *&c.* Now concerning that which is supposed of a Catholick church representative in *Act.* 15. If it were such, then in respect of the Apostles (the catholick Officers) onely, or in respect of the body of the Assembly also, but in neither respects: *Ergo.*

1 Not the first, for then as was said, any one Apostle may make a representative Catholick church, having the whole power, as much as all of them together; for though they would meet oft to consult and assist one another; yet not for defect of power in any one; and we think our brethren here will not say it was in respect of the Apostles alone, supposing here they acted rather

as

as Elders with the rest, then out of their Apostolicall power.

2 Not in respect of the whole Assembly, for then that assembly must consist of the messengers of all the particular Churches, and the decrees should have been directed to all the Churches; but neither of these can appear; For, first, wee read of no other messengers but those from *Antioch*, and how to evince more then the Scriptures reveal, is hard. Secondly, if we look back and consider how far the Gospel was spread before this assembly, it will appear very strange and absurd to suppose such a thing; for *Paul* had been in *Arabia* before ever he came to *Ierusalem*, *Gal.* 1.17. and when he and *Barnabas* were sent out from *Antioch*, *Acts* 13. they went to severall Islands and Countreys, as *Cyprus*, *Paphos*, *Salamis*, *&c.* besides what other places scattered Christians and Apostles had preached in: now there is no probability of messengers sent from all these places.

Secondly, the decrees were expresly directed to the Gentiles beleeving, in *Antioch*, *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, where it seems this question had troubled the minds of the Disciples, *Acts* 15. 23, 24. which was far short of the Catholick church; neither is it proved that the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia* had any messengers there, much lesse that all the Churches had their messengers.

But it is said, *they might have had their messengers there, if they would, and therefore they were bound to the decrees as of a generall Councell.* *Object.*

It must first be proved, that all Churches had lawfull summons to send their messengers to that Assembly, before there can be laid any blame on them for neglecting the same, or they be all tyed to the decrees of such an Assembly as a generall Councell, which seems to us not so much as probable, much lesse to be proved by any where the Scripture is so silent. *Answ.*

Every politicall Body is constituted by the combination of all the members into a Society. *Arg.* 2.

But Christ hath not institnted that the Catholick church should combine into a Society. *Ergo.*

Proved, because there can be no instances given of any free Society, civill or sacred, that was under policy, but that it arose from combination. *Propos.*

How came *Israel* to be one Nationall church, but by a National covenant? and that before it had Officers; or how comes any nationall, provinciall, classicall Church that are pleaded for to be such, but by some such combination? Why is this Church of this

Classis not of another but by combination? Secondly, in a politicall body, the whole hath power to order every part, but this power among persons that are free, is onely by combination.

Assump. Proved: first, because Christ never instituted that which is impossible, as this is, for the Catholick visible Church in every age so to doe.

Secondly, Christ ordained combination for communion in his Worship, but this communion also is impossible to the Catholick church as one: *Ergo.*

Thirdly, corrupt Churches are visible Churches, but it is hard for us to beleeve, or any to prove that Christ hath instituted such combination of all Churches, *Asian, African, European, American,* corrupt and uncorrupt, for prudent men may easily foresee the heavy consequents thereof.

Argum. 3. Every Politicall Church by the institution of Christ hath power to elect her own Pastor or Pastors over it.

But the Catholick visible Church hath not such power: *Ergo.*

Propos. Proved. This all Scripture examples shew, that every Church or flock of beleevers had her Pastor, *Act.* 14. *Tit.* 1.

Secondly, (according to our Brethrens principles) if a particular Church may choose a Pastor, much more the Catholick, because all priviledges are primarily given to the Catholick church, and what belongs to the part of a similar Body, (as a part) that much more belongs to the whole.

Assump. Proved first, If the Catholick church may choose Pastors over it, then they may make Apostles, because Catholick Pastors over the Catholick Church.

Secondly, the Reasons against an universall Bishop are strong here, as that their office is not described in the Word, nor their power able to reach all Churches.

If it be said, that the Catholick church can choose her Pastors in the parts or particular Societies, which are Pastors of the Catholick church, though not Catholick Pastors of the Catholick church.

Answ. If this be meant of the particular Churches choosing Pastors over themselves, who are in some respects for the good of the whole, (as being *partes partium*, and so *partes totius*) then they come to our hand, for thus it appears that there is no Catholick *totum*, that is the subject of officers but in its parts.

But the question is, Whether all particular Churches having the officers

officers in them, do make one politicall Body or Catholick church, and so have power to choose Catholick Pastors.

Christ Jesus instituted no such politicall Body as destroys Church policy. *Argum.* 4.

But such a Catholick church politicall destroys policy: *Ergo.*

Proved: because it swallows up the power not onely of all Churches congregationall, but all other forms of Churches, by taking the power of excommunication from them, for the power of excommunication is seated by Christ in that Church, from which there can be justly no appeal, for *Matth.* 18. the power of excommunication is seated in such a Church, as whatsoever it binds on earth, is bound in heaven by the highest Judge, in the highest Court; and from the sentence of this highest court and Judge, how can there be any appeal? *Assump.*

But now supposing such a Catholick church having power of excommunication, and that as the highest Church, hence no inferior Church can binde on earth, so as that the same is bound in heaven, seeing appeales may be made from them to an higher power on earth.

If it be said that the sentence of an inferior Judge, proceeding rightly (as in an inferior Sanhedrin) is ratified in heaven, yet may we appeale from him. *Object.*

We deny that the sentence of every civill Court doth binde in heaven (in the sense of our Saviour:) for every civil Court hath not this promise of binding and loosing, the power of the Keys not belonging to the civill Magistrate. *Answ.*

Secondly, suppose there were such a binding in civill Courts, and appeals may be yet made from them, yet this is because there is supposed a supreme Court in *being*, to which the appeale may be prosecuted and there determined, (as in the highest Sanhedrin of *Israel.*) But there is not in the Church, nor like to be, such a supreme Court where such appeals may be ended: *Ergo.*

If it be said, that what a particular Church binds on earth is bound in heaven, except they erre, but then appeals may be made, and their power is gone. *Object.* 2.

On this ground the universall Church should not have power to bind on earth so as in heaven without appeales, for they may erre; and that not onely rarely but frequently; witnesse the complaint of *Nazianzen* and others of the time passed; yea, they may be as much inclined to erre, considering the greatest part *Answ.*

of Churches in the world are for the most part corrupt, yea, though they may have better eyes, yet they are further from the mark; if particular Churches have no power of excommunication, because they may erre, be corrupt, be partiall, or be divided; upon the same consideration, neither Classicall, Nationall, or œcumeniall Councells have any such power; for they may erre, grow corrupt, be partiall, and be miserably divided, as well as a congregationall Church; other Churches may admonish in case of scandall, and counsell, when a particular congregation wants light; and moderate (if desired) in case of difference; but still the power is in the particular Church.

Other arguments might be added, but seeing this controversie, as we hope, will be more fully and purposely disputed by a farre better hand, therefore we shall fall to the consideration of such Scriptures, and some few generall Arguments which we meet withall in Mr. *Ball* briefly propounded, and in divers other Authors more largely insisted upon; which if the Lord be pleased to helpe us to vindicate and clear up, we think other reasons and Scriptures of lesse force will fall of themselves.

And first we finde, *Cant.* 6. 4. *&c.* to prove the whole Catholick church visible to be one Ministeriall Body, because it is called *One*, compared to an Army terrible with Banners, in respect of the order of Discipline, and described as being an organicall Body having eyes, hair, teeth, &c.

Answ. 1 *Theologia Symbolica non est argumentativa*, except it can be made clear that the parable is applyed according to the true scope of it, and no further, which here is very hard to evince: we know the whole Book of the *Canticles* is variously applyed by good Interpreters, *Brightman* (none of the meanest in this kinde of Scriptures) applyes this place to the church of *Geneva*, and the times of purer Churches to arise after it, which are said to be terrible as an Army with Banners; not in respect of Discipline, but in respect of warlike power, whereby that state of the church shall defend it self.

Vid. Brightm. An. in Loc.

2 But suppose that it is a description of the catholick church visible, yet it cannot be a sufficient argument that it is one Ministeriall church: For, first, the catholick church is the same in all ages, and therefore by this reason it was a catholick Ministeriall body, as well in the days from *Adam* to *Abraham*, *&c.* as in the New Testament. Secondly, by this argument we may prove Christ

the

the head and husband of the church to be an organicall body, as he is the Head of the Church, for *Cant.* 5.10, 11. *&c.* the Church doth allegorically describe the beauty and excellency of Christ, in severall organs and parts: but we suppose though Christ Jesus in his humane nature hath members, yet the scope of the Church is not at all to set forth the members of his humane body, but the glorious excellencies, and spirituall perfections of Christ as the Redeemer and Saviour of his Church, according to the manner of Lovers, who are taken with the beauty of their spouses in all their members; When the spouse saith, *Cant.* 1.1. *Let him kisse me with the kisses of his mouth*; it were too grosse to apply it to the humanity of Christ, or to argue from thence that Christ the husband of his Church is an organicall body.

Thirdly and lastly, when the Church is called *One*, *the onely one of her Mother*; though it's true she is one, it seems rather to set out her excellency as rare, and but one, then her unity: and so the other descriptions all tend to set forth her beauty in the eye and esteem of Christ; neither is it any thing that the Church is compared to an Army terrible with banners, for in the same *Chap.* vers. the last, she is compared to the company of *Mahanaim*, or two Armies, (which is all one) for the company of *Mahanaim* consisted of two Armies, *Gen.* 32.1,2,3. where *Jacobs* host meeting an host of Angels, he calls the place *Mahanaim*, or, two Hosts; and therefore we may as well say the Catholick church is terrible, with two Armies of Banners, as one.

A second and chief Scripture we meet withall in divers Authors is 1 *Cor.* 12.12, 13. *&c.* Whence the reason stands thus: That church wherein Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, &c. are set, is an organicall Church. *Answ.*

But those are set in the Catholick visible Church; *Ergo.*

For the better clearing of this Scripture, it is needfull, that we attend the scope of the Apostle, who comming now to another branch of the things this Church had written unto him about, *Chap.* 7.1. & 8.1. & 12.1. and this about spirituall gifts, wherein they abounded, *Chap.* 1.7. being the occasion of all their contentions and disorders, *Chap.* 1.12, 13. hence he is studious the more to re-unite them again, *Chap.* 12.13. and to direct them how to improve their gifts orderly to edification, *Chap.* 14. and in this Chapter he perswades their minds to unity who were divided, partly through pride in their own gifts; partly, by disdain of

others

others not so gifted; hence he puts them in minde; 1 What once they were following dumb idols. 2 That all gifts are from the free dispensation of God, and that one God, one Lord, one Spirit. 3 That God in his wisdom hath dispensed great variety of gifts, operations and administrations. 4 That all are given to profit withal, and these things he illustrates by a simile taken from a naturall body, which having largely presented and applyed to this Church, *vers.* 27. he concludes with the variety of administrations in such things wherein they so much differed, *Chap.* 1. 12, 13. God hath set, saith he, in the Church not onely Apostles, or Prophets, or tongues, &c. but all these; are all Apostles? are all Prophets, &c? no, but the wisdom of God hath given you variety of these gifts and administrations; and therefore, *Chap.* 3. to quiet them, he saith, *Paul an Apostle, Apollos an Evangelist, &c. all are yours*; and as this is the scope of the Apostle, so we see nothing in the Chapter but is appliable to *Corinth* in particular, yea, applyed unto them by the Apostle, as what he spake *vers.* 22. of one body, he applyes to them, *vers.* 27. what he spake, *vers.* 28. of Apostles, and other gifts set in the Church, he applyes also to them, *Chap.* 14. whereas he speaks of the exercise of divers gifts in that Church, when the whole Church came together, *vers.* 23, so he speaks the same of himself an Apostle, *vers.* 6. *When I come, &c.* We take notice of divers reasons alledged from the *Chapter*, that he spake of the Catholick church, but they doe not inforce it; for grant such things are true of the Catholick church in a sense, *viz.* that in it God works all in all, in it are diversities of gifts, &c. yet the Apostles scope is to speak to this Church, as hath been shewed, and all are truly applyable unto it, this Church came behinde in no good gift, *Chap.* 1. 7. this Church was one body, *vers.* 27. and baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, the members of this Church needed the helpe one of another, must not make schismes in the Body, must care one for another, &c. yea, Apostles as well as other gifts were in the church, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. 1 *Cor.* 14. 6. So that from the scope and drift of the Apostle, all these Offices and gifts might be, and were set in *Corinth*, and therefore this place will not evince a Catholick organicall body; yet we mean not that Apostles were wedged in here, but they were set also in every church, as also Teachers are in every church, but each according to the nature of the Office, the one limited, the other not.

Secondly,

Secondly, we deny not but in this discourse the Apostle also, *vers.* 12, 13. intendeth the whole mysticall body of Christ, which is one Christ, neither doe we deny that these gifts of Apostles, Prophets, &c. are given to this Church, but this will not prove it to be an organicall Church. For what is this body of Christ, this one Christ into whom all are baptized, &c. It is properly the whole company of true beleevers in all ages, and so containes the invisible body of Christ; which Catholick body of all ages, cannot properly make an organicall body: and be it so, that this body is visible, having visible ordinances, baptized and drunk into one body, yet the Apostle respects the reall union of all the members to Christ; and therefore Interpreters understand spirituall and effectuall baptism, containing the inward vertue with the outward sign.

Again, the Apostles were set for the gathering in of the elect amongst all the heathen nations, but that proves not all these elect (who also are a part of Christs sheep, *John* 10. 16.) were an organicall Church, or a part of it, till called and added to the Church.

In a word, Apostles, Prophets, &c. were given to, and set in the mysticall body of Christ, as the chief object and end for whose sake and good, they were intentionally ordained of Christ, but not set in it as one organicall body, for the actuall and immediate administration of the visible ordinances of Christ to it, but thus to it, as gathered into such Church societies as the Lord hath instituted for that end, and in this sense we agree with learned Mr. *Rutherford* lib. of the right of Presbyt. pag. 291. *Ask* (saith he) *to what end, and to what first principall subject hath the Lord given reason, and the faculty to discourse? Is it to Peter, John, &c. as to the first subject, and to them or for their good? No, no, it is to, and for the race of mankind.* The case is just so here, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. God hath set Apostles, &c.

We say also it is just so here, as God hath given reason in respect of the end to mankinde first, and then to the *individua*, so God hath set in the mysticall Church for the good of it, as chiefly intended by Christ, Apostles, Prophets, &c. but now as in the actuall dispensing of this gift of reason for the good of mankinde, Reason is not given to any such body, as the whole race of mankinde, to descend to *John, Peter, &c.* but first to *John, Peter*, and all the individualls, that so by induction of all particulars, the

whole kinde of reasonable man may be made up, and the end attained, and so it is here: God in giving Officers and gifts for the good of the mysticall body of Christ firstly, yet in execution gives these Officers, and sets them in particular Churches, that by the edification and perfection of all particulars, the whole may be attained.

Thirdly, Apostles, Prophets, and all gifts and offices in generall and indefinitely, are given to the Church indefinitely considered, but particular officers, *Paul, Cephas, Apollo, Titus, Archippus*, &c. are given or set in particular Churches; we mean, according to the severall natures and extents of their offices; As unto Bees in generall is given a power to gather honey, and order themselves in their hives; but in their exercise of this power it is given to the severall swarms in the hives, who have their Queens, &c. to order themselves. But as this power in generall makes not a universall organicall body of Bees; no more here an universall organicall Church.

Lastly, to speak more particularly, we conceive that the place in the utmost latitude of it is meant of the mysticall body, that one body into which all are baptized, *vers.* 13. And that the fundamentall mistake of our Brethren is this, that because the Church here mentioned hath Organs and politicall Officers in it, that therefore it must needs make one politicall Church, where some Organs are to rule in common, and every part is to be subject to the whole. For although the mysticall Church hath Organs and politicall Officers in it, yet it follows not therefore that it is one politicall body. For the invisible Church conjoyned with the visible, hath politicall Officers set in it, and given to it as invisible, as well as visible, in respect of Gods generall designation and particular application of them to this whole Church; yet it follows not that they are one politicall body by actuall combination thereunto; actuall combination, we say, for although Christs institution must warrant and prescribe all forms of politicall bodies, yet it will not be found that ever there was any politicall Society without actuall combination, whether civill or sacred, whether nationall or more particular. The mysticall Church may be said to be organicall in respect of the Officers amongst them in the severall parts thereof, every part being a part of the whole spiritually, though not politically. But it doth not thence follow that the whole is one politicall

body

body, but mysticall. Politicall Officers may, and must suppose some part of the Church to be visible, but not that the whole should be Politicall. For the Apostles (by extraordinary Commission for their time were officers of visible beleevers, fit matter for a combination, as well as of particular combinations: yet it follows not that visible beleevers existing out of combinations were a politicall Society that would never meet to combine; but they were onely a visible number of Saints.

We have been thus large in clearing this Scripture, because we conceive the chief strength of the contrary opinion to lye in it. And this being answered, the light of it we hope will scatter the darknesse that is brought upon divers other Scriptures which are drawn to prove such a kinde of Catholick Church, as *Rom.* 12. 4. &c. *Col.* 1. 25. 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Ephes.* 4. 11. In which last Scripture we never doubted but that the Officers were given, not for that particular Church of *Ephesus* onely, much lesse to such a diminutive Congregation consisting of 40, 60, or 100 onely, as if we intended to inpawn all power in this or that Congregational body; but to a congregationall Church considered as the *genus* of all particular Congregations of the world. Neither to this congregationall Church onely, but to all that are to be gathered to the unity of the faith. But doth this argue one politicall body consisting of all these? For though, *vers.* 16. the whole body be said to be compacted; yet that this should be understood of a politicall, not spirituall way of compacting, we confesse (with submission) our weakneſse cannot apprehend.

The last Scripture which we find cited that seemeth to look this way, is 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. *Feed the flock which is among you.*

1 We answer: It must necessarily be understood distributively, for the severall flocks in all those Countreys to be fed by their particular Elders; not collectively, to be fed as one flock in common: For the Countreys are so many and large, as it was impossible. Yea, we have a clear parallel, *James* 2. 2. where writing to the Jews of the twelve Tribes scattered abroad, yet he speaks of a man comming into their *Assembly*; which cannot be meant collectively, as if they had one assembly amongst them all, but distributively of any assembly. *Answ.*

2 Though they bee called a flock, not flocks, yet this, as *Beza* observes, was not because it was one flock really in themselves, but in some respect of reason; which also he expounds to

be *per internam* (we had rather say, *spiritualem*) *unionem*, but not *per externam combinationem*; in respect of which spirituall union, that is true which Mr. *Ball* citeth out of *Cyprian*, *Etsi Pastores multi sumus, unam tamen gregem pascimus*. As also that there is *Episcopatus unus & Ecclesia una in toto mundo*.

Cypr. lib. 3. Epist. 13.
Cypr. lib. 4. Epist. 7.

Hence also may appear an answer to divers arguments, the chief whereof we shall run through.

Object. 1. *If by baptism we are not admitted into one particular Church, but into the whole Catholick visible Church,* 1 Cor. 12. 13. *then there is such a Catholick Church.*

Answ. Baptism admitteth us into the whole mysticall body of Christ, whether visible or invisible of all ages: But this is not a Catholick Politicall body, of which we speak; for then every baptized person should be a member of every particular Church, and have an Oare in every boat, in electing Officers, admitting members, censuring offenders, &c. which Mr. *Ball* will not grant, and indeed would bring in endlesse confusion into the Churches of Christ. Besides, no man can be a member of any combined society without their consent, for otherwise so many may croud into the Church because baptized, as shall overthrow the edification thereof, and that against the consent of the Church, and all the Officers thereof.

Object. 2. *When any scandalous person is delivered to Satan, he is cast out of the whole Catholick church,* Ergo, *he was a member of the whole Catholick Church, for he cannot be cast out who was never within.*

Answ. 1 Some answer that he is cast out of all onely *consequenter*, by reason of communion of Churches; neither doe we see that this is taken away by saying, that, As when the left hand cutteth off a finger of the right hand, it is not the left hand onely that cuts it off, but the whole man, deliberate reason and will consenting: For if this similitude would suit, then the whole Catholick church must be called to consult and consent *antecedenter*, before a particular Church can cut off any member, which ordinarily is impossible to be attain'd.

2 But further according to our former principles laid down, we say he that is justly cast out of one Church, he is morally excommunicated out of all, but not politically and formally: For, to excommunicate politically and formally, is by vertue of a superior authority next under Christ; so that what is bound by them, is bound in heaven. In which act the Minister doth not onely

onely bind the person, but also by vertue of his Office chargeth the Church not to have communion with him. But we doe not think that our Brethren will say that one Church putteth forth such an act of superior authority binding or charging all Churches *politice* and *judicialiter* not to have communion with him, for so one Church should exercise jurisdiction over all Churches, and that without their actuall approbation, for, *quod spectat ad omnes, debet ab omnibus approbari.*

If it be said, *That a particular Church doth excommunicate by an intrinsecall power not onely in it self, but intrinsecall in the whole body, the question will be, What is that intrinsecall power? Is it naturall or voluntary?*

To say it is naturall, were too absurd; if voluntary, then neither Congregations, Classes, Provinces, Nations, have power to excommunicate without the previous consent of the whole Catholick church, which must voluntarily concurr thereunto. And if the Catholick Presbytery (as is said) have no next, but a remote power of excommunication, and this remote power bee extraordinary, or *rare contingent*, or *almost never*, then the ordinary power of excommunication, (which is enough for us) is not from an intrinsecall power of the Church catholick. On the other side (if it be said) this power is in the whole, but not derived from the whole to the parts, as the power of seeing is first in the man, then in the eye, yet not derived from hands, leggs, shoulders, &c. and as the great body of the Sunn hath intrinsecall light in every part, not by derivation from one part to another; so this power of the Keys is from Christ the Head to all the integral parts in points that severally concern the same.

First, if this be so, then every particular Congregation receives its power of the Keys immediately from Christ, not by derivation from any Presbytery, or the Catholick Church, and is in that respect Independent. Neither also can Congregations derive the power seated in them to Presbyteries, nor any greater bodies take it from them.

Secondly, though we acknowledge this intrinsecall power of excommunication in particular Congregations, as being there properly seated by Christ; yet that there are any such politicall Churches, Classicall, Provinciall, Nationall, or Catholick, that have any such intrinsecall power as is in the Sunn, this is not yet

proved to our understanding. We deny not the use of lesser and greater Synods, nor of such Doctrinall power as the pattern *Acts* 15. holdeth forth, and which is all that Learned *Mr. Rutherford* conceives to belong to a generall Councell; for thus he saith, *Verily, I professe I cannot see what power of jurisdiction to censure scandalls can be in a generall Councell, there may be some more Doctrinall power in such a Councell, if such could be had, and that is all.* And how a Nationall, Provinciall, or Classicall Synod being lesser parts of the whole, can put forth such acts as the whole cannot do, *ipsi viderint*. 'Tis true, a particular Church may formally cast out a scandalous member according to the rule, *Matth.* 18. yet the argument from proportion will not hold in respect of the power of excommunication in greater assemblies against any particular Church offending, (though other means appointed by Christ we deny not) for if excommunication casteth out an offender out of all Churches, then such a particular Church cannot be excommunicated, except it could be cast out of it self, though it may be deprived of the communion of other Churches.

+ Right of Presbyt. *pag.* 482.

Lastly, if it be no sin, (as is said) but a crosse, that the Catholick Church cannot meet to put forth its supposed intrinsecall power, then let the particular Churches enjoy that power till the Catholick Church can meet. 2 It seems to us very strange that the Lord Jesus should institute such a supreme power in a Catholick Body, which (as is said) *de jure*, should be till the comming of Christ, and yet should be interrupted by the sin of man so many ages, and which (for ought appeares) never orderly met to this day.

Object. 3. *If all Pastors be Pastors of the Catholick Church, then there is such a Catholick Church; but all Pastors are Pastors of the Catholick Church: Ergo.*

Answ. If it be meant thus, that they are Pastors of some particular part of the Church, and in that respect in the whole, and for the good of the whole, the good of every part redounding to the good of the whole; yea if some Pastorall care also be intended towards other Churches, and to fetch in such as are yet not of the Church; we grant all this according to the meaning of that place, 2 *Cor.* 12. 28. formerly opened by us.

But if this Argument intend that they are Pastors of the Catholick Body as of *One* Politicall Church, then we deny the Assumption upon this ground; because a Pastorall Office consists properly

perly in having a charge and power over those to whom he is a Pastor, *Act.* 20. 28. but he hath no charge of the whole; for if so, he must give account to Christ of the whole; neither hath he power over such a Catholick church, being never chosen by it, nor it subjecting to him. If it be said, such are made Pastors by Ordination of the Presbyters, not the election of the people who onely appropriate him to themselves, who is a Pastor of the whole Church: then he is either a Catholick Pastor that hath power to intermeddle in all Churches, as the Apostles had, which we think none will yeeld them; or else they are Pastors onely in name, without power, which is absurd. Nor doth the similitude of a Physitian made Doctor of Physick at large by a Colledge of Physitians, helpe in this case. For it supposeth him to be made such a Doctor before he be elected by any people to exercise this faculty; which applyed to this case of a Pastor, as having Ordination to make him a Pastor at large, before election to this or that people, is utterly against all examples of Scripture, as *Acts* 1. 8. 6. & 14.

That which belongeth to a little part of a similar body (quâ talis) belongs to a greater part much more; and therefore if the immediate exercise of the Keys belong to a single congregation, then much more to the whole, and to any greater part of the whole. Object. 4.

1 Such as say that the Catholick Church is a similar Body, had need explicate themselves. For to speak properly and strictly, by this rule every particular visible beleever being a part of the whole as a *totum aggregativum*, must have *nomen & naturam totius*, and so every beleever is a Church; or if they so divide this Catholick similar body, as to make a particular Congregation that can joyn in Gods ordinances, the *minimum quod sic*; then particular visible beleevers considered as existing out of these Congregations cannot be members formally of the Catholick visible Church. Answ.

2 We acknowledge the Catholick church considered as visible and invisible, is one spirituall or mysticall body, yet this Catholick body is under no Catholick policy; but onely in the severall parts of it, (as hath been proved before) and in this respect the Church, which is spiritually one body, is *politicè* many bodies: so that the parts of this spirituall *totum* are not distinct bodies *spirituali relatione*, (for then every company of women are a Church body) but *politicâ combinatione*; and hence though the Catholick church be one similar body spiritually, (due cautions

and

and interpretations observed) yet it is not one similar Body politically; and hence every society of beleevers is not a Church. Hence though it be true, that what belongs to a part of a similar body, as a part, belongeth much more to the whole; and that therefore what belongs to a particular Church, belongs much more to the whole: It is true in this sense, *viz.* what belongs to the part of the whole as spirituall, and so participates the nature of the whole, belongs much more to the whole, because the whole is spirituall: yet what belongs to the part as politicall, doth not much more belong to the whole, because the whole is not politicall: *Exempli gratia*, consider a particular Congregation, as a number redeemed, called to *Christ*, united to him, this much more belongs to the whole; and so if any priviledge belong to them as such, much more to the whole. Yet consider a Church as a combined Body, so what belongs to this part, belongs not to the whole. For it belongs to the part to elect and enjoy constantly Pastors over it, but this doth not belong to the whole as a *totum*. The Catholick mysticall Church is indeed the *prima materia*, out of which politicall Churches by their combination are formed, but it is no first formed politicall similar Church, whence every particular Church immediately participates of the nature of that whole, having in it *partem talis materiæ & partem formæ*.

Object. 5. *If there be Church communion between all Churches, then there is one Catholick Church: but there is Church communion of all Churches in hearing, receiving Sacraments, exhorting one another, praying one for another, &c.* Ergo.

Answ. We deny the consequence; for there may be a Paternall, Ecclesiasticall communion, not onely internally, but externally, without such an union as makes one politicall combined Body, such as here we dispute of; as, two or three Congregations may have communion together, and yet not be one politicall Body: Twenty synagogues might have communion together in the Jewish policy, and yet were not one politicall Body: so the Churches of *Galatia* might have communion together, yet were distinct Churches, not one Church; as also, the Churches of *New England* have sweet and blessed communion, yet are distinct. And though the Churches of *Galatia* were called a whole lump, (as is objected) yet were they thus by politicall combinations, or as Dr. *Downam* (to mould up a Diocesan Church) compares the first

first Church to a great lump of dough, or batch of bread, out of which particular Churches were formed into many loaves; or not rather called a lump by spirituall union and relation, common profession, and fraternall communion, being all the same Countrey-men; so also the Apostles had Church communion, yet were not a politicall body. Kingdoms so may have civil communion and commerce, yet not be one Kingdom.

Obj. 6. *If the Keys be given to a particular Church under the notion of the Spouse of Christ, a flock of redeemed ones, &c. and then much more to the Catholick visible Church, which is the Spouse of Christ, and flock of redeemed ones primarily, and to a particular Church onely secondarily; but the first is affirmed by such as deny such a Catholick Church:* Ergo.

Answ. 1 It is true, the notion of a flock of redeemed ones of the Body, and Spouse of Christ, Kingdom, House, &c. doe agree primarily to the Church, not of this, but of all ages, and secondarily to the Church of this age, *Colos.* 1. 18. *Ephes.* 5. 25, 26. and 2. 19.

2 The Church which is the Body of Christ existing in this age, the Keys are given to it primarily, in comparison of particular Churches *coexisting* with it, as to the chief object and end; but not to it as a politicall Body, in respect of actuall and immediate dispensation thereof: for (as we have oft said) if in respect of Politicall dispensation the Keys belong firstly to the Body of Christ as his Spouse and redeemed ones; then the Church invisible as invisible, rather then visible, must have the dispensation of the Keys primarily.

3 It is not said, that the Keys are immediately given to a particular Church abstractly, as a number of redeemed, but as consociated and politically combined: And in this respect that may be attributed to the part, a particular Congregation of redeemed ones, which cannot be attributed to the whole. *Ex. gr.* such a Congregation is combined, so is not the whole, nor can be; such a Church may choose a Pastor over it, but so cannot the whole; so a man may tell the particular Church, who may convene together, not so the whole.

Thus far (through the helps of Christ) we have endevoured to clear the first Point propounded concerning a Catholick instituted Church. We come now to prove the second Point, *viz.* That Jesus Christ hath instituted in the Gospel a particular Church

of one Congregation, in which, and unto which the actuall and immediate dispensation and participation of all instituted Worship doe regularly and ordinarily belong.

And here we shall shew: 1 What such a particular Church is. 2 How the dispensation of Church power and priviledge do belong unto it. For the first, we shall declare our selves in these Five Propositions.

1 It must be a visible Society, for *One* man cannot make a Church, nor can many visible beleevers living severally, without society in severall Nations make *One* Church.

2 It's not every Society of visible Professors that doe make a Church, for then every family of such Professors are a Church: Then two or three (which our Brethren so much condemn) are a Church; and then a Society of Women professing the truth may be a Politicall Church; then many members of severall Churches met to hear a Sermon, or any like occasion, make a Church; then a number of Professors may constitute a Diocesan Church, or any like form; for out of this block, That any number of beleevers made a Church, Dr. *Downam* hewed out his Diocesan Church, and so made a fit seat for his Diocesan Mercury. Lastly, then particular Churches should have no more any set Form prescribed, then Civill government, which is as variable as humane wisdome sees meet, for hence a particular Church may be melted into any form or mould of civil Society; for imagine a number of professing beleevers, cohabiting either in a City, Hundred, Wapentake, Shire, Province, Nation, Empire, &c. there shall then be so many forms of Churches contrary to the principles and unanswerable arguments of our best Reformers, who accounted it a great absurdity that the heavenly Kingdome of Christ should be moulded and framed according to the weakneſse of humane wisdome and policy.

3 It must therefore be a Society combined, and that by a Covenant explicite or implicite, for it must be such a combined Society where the whole have power over its members; now whatever power one hath over another, if it be not by way of conquest or naturall relation, (as the father over the childe) it is by covenant, as husband and wife, Master and servant, Prince and people; other powers are but usurpations: it is noted as a prophane speech in *Brennus*, who professed he knew no other rule of Justice, then for the greater to subdue the lesse. Again, it is such

such a Society as hath an ordinate power, to subject it self to Officers, by electing of them to administer ordinances amongst them; but this is onely a federall Society.

Again, it is such a Society, to the making up of which is required something more then faith, *Acts* 5.14. *Beleevers were added to the Lord*, or to his Church; so that they were first beleevers, before they were added to the Church; for there may be a number of beleevers converted at one Sermon, and immediately scattered into many Towns or Countreys: Now, if faith professed alone, makes not a Church, but somewhat more is required, what can that be but fœderall combination?

Lastly, that, the dissolution whereof doth unchurch a people, doth constitute a Church: but breaking the combination dissolves the Church, whether by consent, schism, or when God himself removes the candlestick: *Ergo*.

4 Though a Church be such by combining, and so subjecting themselves to the power of others, yet it must not be herein illimited, but according to the form and mould expressed in the Word; for if they have this power to combine as many, and as largely as they will, then a Diocese, Province, Nation, may combine, and so put themselves under the power of a Diocesan, Provinciall, Nationall society, which is unlawfull; for the Church must be such a form as a man may ordinarily bring offences unto it, according to *Matth.* 18. *Tell the Church*; but that cannot be in a Diocese, much lesse in a Province or Nation, where the Members can neither take notice of the offence, nor ordinarily so much as consent unto any censure acted by any Officers in such a Church; nay, further, if their power be unlimited, they may choose a Diocesan Pastor, one, or many to feed all, or one to rule (like *Beza* his *Episcopus humanus*) with subjection in case of error to the censure of all; nay, hence we see not, but they may choose an universall Pastor, and so give away the power to one, if all will agree.

In a word, they onely may combine into a Politicall Body, where the whole may excommunicate any part; but this cannot be in a combination of many Churches into one whole, because no particular Church is capable of excommunication, for it is impossible to be cast out of it self, as was said before.

5 A particular Church therefore must be such a Society as is so combined together, that it may ordinarily enjoy Church com-

munion, to exercise Church power, to be fed by her Officers, and led by them; hence *Titus* was to set Elders in every Church, and these Elders were such as could ordinarily feed them, by preaching the Word, as well as rule and govern them.

Now that such a Congregationall Church is the institution of the Gospel, appears first by those many Scriptures that speak of the Churches of one Countrey, and in small compasse, as severall Churches, not as one, as the Churches of *Judea*, *Samaria*, and *Galilee*, *Acts* 9. the Churches of *Galatia*, *Gal.* 1.1. yea, not only in one small Countrey, but in Cities, or near unto them; we read of distinct Churches, as *Corinth*, though God had much people there, yet it was one Congregation, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. and had another Church near to it, *viz. Cenchrea*: Also *Rome*, whom the Apostle saluting, sends also salutations by them to *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, with the Church in their houshold, which shew they were not far from that Church of *Rome*. To these add, that *Jerusalem* the first Church that was constituted by the Apostles, and whose number was the greatest of any that we read of, yet it was but one Congregation, as is evident by *Acts* 1. and *Chap.* 2.41,42. What is objected against this to prove it the Catholick Church, was answered before; other objections against this, and like examples, shall be considered in their due place, as we meet with them.

But we shall not need to say much, that a Congregation furnished with its Officers is a Church according to the institution of the Gospel, but there are more objections against the compleatnesse thereof, which yet is proved thus, That Church which hath power of all the Keys given unto it for actuall administration within it self, is a compleat Church: But so hath a particular Congregation, *Ergo*. The first part is evident; because where all the Keys are with full power to administer the same, there nothing is wanting; the Assumption is proved thus, If all those Officers to whom is given the authoritative power of exercising the Keys, be given to a Congregation; then all the Keys are so given to it, but so it is; for since Apostles and extraordinary Officers ceased, there are no other Officers but Pastors, Teachers, and Rulers, called sometimes Bishops, sometimes Elders: but these Officers are given to such a Church, as is proved *Acts* 14. *Tit.* 1.4. and is acknowledged in all Reformed Churches, who ordain such Officers in particular Churches of one Congregation: *Ergo*.

If

If it be said, that though a Congregation hath such Officers as have the power of the Keys, yet that such must combine with others in way of co-ordination to govern in common, and so to be helped and compleated by them. Object. 1.

We grant much help may be had by sister Churches, and consultative Presbyteries, but that which takes away the exercise of the Keys in point of government from the church to whom Christ hath given it, doth not compleat it, but take away and destroy the power and liberty of it; for though the Pastor of a congregation may oft consent, yet the major part of the Presbytery must carry it, whether he consent or no, and therefore his power is swallowed up. Besides, it seems to us a mystery, that every Pastor, even such as have no flock, should be Pastors of the Catholick church, and yet a Pastor should not have power to rule in his own flock over which Christ hath made him a Bishop, and for which flock he must give account unto God. Answ.

It cannot have a Synod, which is one ordinance of God, therefore it is not a compleat Church. Object. 2.

By this reason a Classicall church is not compleat, because it cannot have a Nationall councell; nor a Nationall church, because it cannot have a generall councell; if it be said a classis have all ordinary meanes to a compleat church, we say the like of a congregation. Answ.

Though a Town or family being cast alone, may govern as a compleat body; yet when it stands in a common-wealth, as in England, *it may not be so independent, but submit to combinations: so here when a particular Congregation is alone, it may govern as compleat; not so when amongst other Churches.* Object. 3.

If such a Town or family have compleat power, and all civill Officers within it self, it is not bound to submit to such combinations in a common-wealth, except it be under a superior power that can command the same. As *Abraham* having a compleat government in his family was not bound to combine with the governments he came amongst, neither did he; in prudence he joyned in a league of amity and for mutual help with *Aner*, &c. but not to submit to their government: so here a Church having compleat Officers is not bound to submit to such combinations, except it be proved that any superior power of other churches can command the same. Answ.

Secondly, though a family not having compleat civill govern-

ment in it self must combine where it stands in a commonwealth, yet never to yeeld up its family-government over wife, children and servants to rule them in common with other Masters of families, no civill prudence or morall rule taught men ever so to practise; and therefore why in such a case should a Church give up the government of it self to Pastors of many Churches to rule it in common, and not rather as a Classis is over-awed by the Provinciall onely in common things; so in congregations Pastors should govern their flocks, and onely in things common be under a Presbytery. If it be said, *That the Classis do act in such things only; for in excommunication of an offender, the offence is common to all.* We answer, if so, then why should not the Provinciall and Nationall Churches by this reason assume all to themselves from the Classis? for the offence of one is common to all: As also upon this ground, why should not the Classis admit all the members of every Congregation under them? for this also may concern them all.

Thirdly, here is a great difference, for civill Societies are left to civill prudence, and may give up themselves to many forms of government: but Churches are bound to use and maintain such order of government as Christ hath set in the church, and not to give it up to many, no more then to one: If testimonies were needfull, we might produce *Zanchi*, *Zwinglius*, *Parker*, *Baines*, and others, who are fully with us in this doctrine of a particular church; yea, Dr. *Downam* himself confesseth, that the most of the churches in the time of the Apostle *Paul* did not exceed the proportion of a populous congregation; and this confession puts us in minde of a witty passage of his Refuter, or his Epistoler, who against the Bishops maintains the doctrine of congregationall churches with us; with whose expressions, (for the recreation of our selves and the Reader) we will conclude: *The Papist*, (saith he) *he tels us* (*just as the Organs goe at* Rome) *that the extent of a Bishops jurisdiction is not limited but by the Popes appointment, his power of it self indifferently reaching over all the world. Our Prelatists would perswade us* (*to the tune of Canterbury*) *that neither church nor Bishop hath his bounds determined by the Pope, nor yet by Christ in the Scriptures, but left to the pleasure of Princes, to be cast into one mould with the Civill State. Now the plain Christian finding nothing but humane uncertainties in either of these devises, he contenteth himself with plain song, and knowing that Christ hath appointed Christians to*

gather

gather themselves into such Societies as may assemble themselves together for the worship of God, and that unto such he hath given their peculiar Pastors; he, I say, in his simplicity calleth these Assemblies, the Churches of Christ, and these Pastors, his Bishops.

Thus much concerning the nature of a particular church, and that it is instituted in the Gospel.

Now in the second place wee are to shew how church government and Ordinances are given to it as to the proper subject of the same. Where we shall propound these *Theses* for explication of our selves.

First, Though Pastourship considered as an office in relation to a people to feed them authoritatively, be one of these Ordinances given to a particular church: Yet Christ hath given it for the gathering in of his elect unto the church, and therfore wee grant some acts of the Ministery, *viz.* the preaching of the Word, is to be extended beyond the bounds of the church.

Secondly, Seales and other Priviledges although *de jure*, and remotely they belong to the catholique church, or the number of beleevers: yet *de facto* and nextly they belong properly to this Subject which wee speake of, (as wee hope to make good.)

Thirdly, They are not so appropriated to such congregations onely as to exclude the members of those congregations which are under the government of a common Presbytery or other formes of government, for wee have a brotherly esteeme of such congregations, notwithstanding that *tertium quoddam separabile* of government, (as Mr. *Baines* cals it) being a thing that commeth to a church now constituted, and may be absent, the church remaining a Church.

Fourthly, although it be said by some Divines, that as faith is the internall form of the church, so profession of faith is the outward form, and that therefore bare profession of faith makes a member of the visible church, yet this must be understood according to the interpretations of some of them who so speak, for there is a double profession of faith; Personall, which is acted severally by particular persons; and common, which is acted conjointly in, and with a Society: The first makes a man of the catholick number of visible Saints, and so fit matter for politicall church-society: the other makes a man of the politicall church formally and compleatly; and in this latter sense profession of faith is the externall form of a visible church, but not in the other.

Now

Now that in and to this subject so professing, the seals and other ordinances belong may, be proved thus:

Argum. 1. First, the seals and other Church-ordinances must either belong to the Catholick church as such, or to the particular Church: but these cannot belong to the Catholick in actuall dispensation whereof we now speak: *Ergo.* For that Church which is uncapable of actuall dispensation of seales, censures, &c. is uncapable of the participation thereof in an orderly and ordinary way; But the Catholick number of visible beleevers as Catholick, and out of particular Societies, are not capable of dispensing the same; *Ergo.*

The Proposition is evident, for it cannot be shewed that any Church in the New Testament was ever capable of participating in seals, that was not capable of dispensing them, at least not having a next power to elect Officers to do it.

The Assumption is evident from what hath been proved, that it is no politicall Body (the sole subject of Church administrations) neither in the whole, nor in the parts as existing out of Congregations.

Argum. 2. If the members of the Catholick church be bound to joyn into particular Societies, that they may partake of seals, &c. then the seals are not to be administred immediatly to them, for then they should have the end without the means.

But they are bound to joyn in such Societies for that end, for otherwise there is no necessity of erecting any particular Churches in the world; and so all the glory of Christ in this respect should be laid in the dust, and these particular temples destroyed, and thus a door of liberty is opened to many to live loosely without the care and watch, and communion of any particular Church in the world.

Argum. 3. If the seals are to be administred immediately to beleevers, or professing beleevers as such, then they may be administred privately to any one where-ever he be found; but that were very irregular and against the common doctrine of Protestant Divines, who give large testimony against private Baptism, or of the Lords-supper, neither doe we see any weight in the arguments of the Papists or Anabaptists alledged for the contrary.

Argum. 4. Lest we seem to stand alone in this controversies, let the arguments produced by *Didoclavius*, and him that writes concerning *Perth* Assembly against private Baptisms, be considered, and it will be

be found that most of them doe strongly conclude against administration thereof to any but Church-members.

The learned Author Mr. *Ball* in this his dispute against our Conclusion: yet in his Discourse let fall sundry things that confirm it; as when he describes the *Catholick Church to be the Society of men professing the faith of Christ, divided into many particular Churches.* Whence we argue, if the Catholick church existeth onely in these particular Churches, the seales must onely be given to them and the members thereof; also, *That Baptism is a solemn admission into the Church of Christ, and must of necessity be administred in a particular Society*: Whence three things will follow; First, that Baptism sometimes administred privately by the Apostles is not an ordinary pattern. Secondly, that Baptism is not to be administred to beleevers (as such) immediatly, if of necessity it must be administred in a particular Society. Thirdly, joyning to some particular Society being an Ordinance of God of so great concernment; & if Baptism must be administred in it, why ought not, why may not such joyn to that Society? (at least as members for a time.) Also when he saith divers times, *That men are made members of the Church by Baptism*, (speaking of such Churches as choose *Officers* over them;) *yea, that the Apostles constituted Churches by Baptism*, and the like, (which we shall note in the answer;) Now what doe these argue but a yeelding of the cause? for if the Apostles made members, and constituted Churches by Baptism, this was onely sacramentally, and if so, then of necessity they must be really members of such Churches before Baptism.

Argum. 5.

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Thus we have run through this large field of the Catholick and particular Church, which hath detained us longer then we intended; yet, to prevent mistakes from any thing that have been said concerning the union, communion, and combination of the Churches; we shall add these two things.

1 We observe that the Scripture speaks of the Church, sometimes as *One* body, sometimes as many, and therefore called Churches; and hence our care is to preserve not onely the distinction of Churches, (as many by particular combinations) but also their unity, as being one by spirituall relation.

2 Association of divers particular Churches we hold needfull, as well as the combination of members into one; yet so as there be no schism of one from another, nor usurpation of one over another, that either one should deprive the rest of peace by schism;

or many should deprive any one of its power by usurpation; hence a fraternall consociation we acknowledge; consociation we say, for mutuall counsell and helpe, to prevent or remove sinne and schism; yet fraternall onely, to preserve each others power; consociation of Churches we would have cumulative, (not in words, but in deed) to strengthen the power of particular Churches, not privative, to take away any power which they had from the gift of Christ before.

For as on the one side it may seem strange that *One* Church offending should have no means of cure by the conceived power of many; so on the other side the danger may appear as great, and frequently falls out, that when many Churches are scandalous, one innocent Church may be hurt by the usurpation of all. And hence we see not, but that fraternall consociation is the best medicine to heal the wounds of both.

We utterly dislike such Independency as that which is maintained by contempt, or careless neglect of sister Churches; *Faciunt favos & vespæ, faciunt Ecclesias & Marcionitæ*, saith *Tertullian*. *Tertul. lib. 4. Com. Mar.*

We utterly dislike such dependency of Churches upon others, as is built upon usurpations and spoils of particular Churches.

Having thus largely digressed for the clearing of the foundation of the dispute in hand, we desire to be excused if we be the more brief in our answers to particulars, which now we shall attend unto as they lye in order.

CHAP. VI.

Reply. *THe seals are given unto the Church not onely in ordinary, (as you say) but also in extraordinary dispensation, &c. And when you say, the dispensing of the seals is an ordinance given onely for the edifying of the Church gathered, must it not be understood of extraordinary dispensation as well as of ordinary, &c. added these words [ordinary dispensation] were, to prevent the objection which you foresaw might be made from the Apostles practice and example, but so as they cut asunder the sinews of the consideration it self, and make it of no force.*

Answ. Before we come to the particulars of the Reply, it is needfull to clear our meaning from this mistake about the word [*ordinary dispensation*;] which being rightly understood, it will appear that it

it no way cuts the sinews of the consideration as is objected. For whereas, first, you extend the opposite term, [*extraordinary dispensation*] to the whole generall practice of the Apostles and Evangelists; and secondly, take it for granted, that their practice was not to baptize members of particular Churches: we neither intended the first, nor doe we grant the second; as for the first, we acknowledge freely that the Apostles and Evangelists ordinarily and generally practiced according to comon rules in this point of baptizing, as well as in other, and left their practice for our pattern, and therefore their ordinary practice in this thing we shall stick to; yet they having not onely extraordinary power above Pastors and Teachers, but also having sometime an immediate call unto some acts and speciall guidance of the Spirit to warrant what they did, therefore there were some of their actions, especially in respect of some circumstances thereof, which ordinary Pastors (not so assisted) may not doe; as in this case when they baptized in private houses, in the wilderness alone, and not in the face of a Congregation, &c. and therefore if in some few cases some doe think they did not baptize into a particular Church; yet if their ordinary practice were otherwise, we ought to imitate the ordinary, not some extraordinary cases; and thus the sinews and force of the consideration remains strong, notwithstanding this word of [*ordinary dispensation:*] and that this was our meaning, was not hard to discern, by the Scriptures cited in the answer, to prove the seales are given unto the Church in ordinary dispensation, amongst which, *Acts* 2.41, 42, 47. containing the Apostles first practice in this kinde are expressed; and Mr. *Ball* took notice thereof, as appears by his own reference to the same afterwards, though in his printed Reply those quotations bee wholly left out.

2 Let us consider whether the Apostles ordinarily did not baptize into particular Churches; and this may be proved from the stories of their ordinary practice: First, it will be easily granted that the Apostles did gather disciples into particular visible Churches, but there is no other time or season of doing it can be shewed in all the stories of their Acts; yea, sometimes they were so suddenly called away, or enforced away by persecution after they had converted disciples, that it is very improbable, if not impossible, they should do it at all, but when they converted and baptized them, as *Acts* 16.40. & 17.5. &c.

But to come more particularly unto the story it self, the Apostles first, and exemplary practise being the best interpreter of their commission, and of their ordinary proceeding therein; the first converts which the Apostles baptized after the visible kingdom of Christ was set up, were those in that famous place, *Acts* 2.41. concerning whom observe, first, that the Apostle *Peter* not onely preached unto them repentance and faith in the name of Christ, with promise of remission of sins; and that they should be baptized, but according to that commission, *Mat.* 28. with many other words he exhorted them, saying, *Save your selves from this untoward generation*, being the very scope of his exhortation; and this implies a gathering of themselves to the fellowship of the saints; and al this Word they gladly received before they were baptized.

2 When the holy Ghost, vers. 41. declareth their baptizing, he records withall their adding to them, the latter being an exegesis of the former, and that the same day, as being performed at the same time; and indeed when a convert publickly professeth his faith in Christ, is it not as easily done, to receive him to a particular visible Church, as into the Catholick before Baptism; but first to baptize them, and then the same day to add or joyn them to the Church, is altogether unprobable. And that this adding was to a particular Church, is sufficiently proved before.

The next place you may note, is *Acts* 5. 14. where the Holy Ghost omitting the baptizing of those beleevers, yet speaks of their adding to the Lord, as if the one implyed the other; and that their adding to the Lord, was by their joyning to the Church, is evident by the opposition between verse 13 & 14. Of the rest durst no man joyn himself to them, but beleevers were the more added to the Lord.

3 In the conversion of *Samaria*, although so great a work is declared in so few words in one verse, *Act.* 8. 12. yet the text puts a manifest distinction of *Philips* doctrine between the things of the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ: which plainly enough sheweth, that they taught the observing of the order of the Kingdom of Christ, as well as the Doctrine of the name of Christ, the object of saving faith. And this they received by faith, and professed before they were baptized.

Now the first and most famous examples of the Apostles perswading that so they practised, why should we doubt of their like practice in other examples when nothing is said that contradicteth

tradicteth the same? as *Acts* 10. in the baptizing of *Cornelius* his house, where so many were met, and the Holy Ghost fell on all; why should we think the Apostle *Peter* baptized them, and left them out of the order of Christ, wherein they should worship him, and be edified in the faith? If we doubt of it, because the Scripture is silent therein, we may as well question whether those beleevers, *Acts* 4.4. & 9.35. & vers.42. whether any of these confessed their faith, or were baptized, for nothing is said thereof: So likewise *Acts* 11. where we read of many beleeving, turning to the Lord, vers.21. of the adding others to the Lord, vers.24. but nothing of their confession of faith or baptism, and yet they are called a Church; whereby it appears that the holy Ghost sometime expresseth their baptism without joyning to the Church; and sometimes joyning without baptism, and sometime he expresseth both, *Acts* 2.41. And therefore hence we may conclude the like of the case of *Lydia* and the Jaylor; considering the former practice of the Apostles: and that the Apostle speaks so expresly of a Church at *Philippi* in the beginning of the Gospel, *Phil.* 4. at which time we have no more conversions expressed but of those two families; at least, they were the most eminent fruits of *Pauls* Ministery at that time; and it is very probable the Church was gathered in *Lydia's* house, seeing *Paul* going out of prison to her house, he is said to see the Brethren, and comfort them, so departing, verse 40. Besides, why might not the Apostle baptize them into that particular visible Church in such a case, as well as into the Catholick, or all Churches, as some say, they professing subjection to Christ in every ordinance of his, with reference to that Church he had there constituted? The fulnesse of power in the Apostles might doe greater matters without breach of order, though no rule for us so to do; neither is it strange from the practice of those times to begin a Church in a family, seeing the Apostle speaks of Churches in three severall families, *Rom.* 16. 5. *Col.*4.15. *Phil.*2. which though many understand to be called Churches in regard of the godlinesse of those families; yet if we consider; First, how many eminent Saints the Apostle salutes, (who no doubt had godly families) not so much as naming their households; much lesse giving them such a title, but onely to these three named. Secondly, how distinct his salutations are, first the *Governors, and then the Church in their house.* Thirdly, that the Apostle doth not onely send his salutations to the Church in the

house of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, *Rom.* 16. 5. but also keeping the name of a Church, he sends salutations from that Church to the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. All which doe strongly argue there is more in it, then that they were godly families, and therefore may perswade us that there were indeed constituted Churches in those Families, though other Christians also might joyn with them.

Thus having cleared our meaning, and the consideration it self, there will remain very few extraordinary cases, (if any) of whom it can be proved, they were not joyned to some particular Church when baptized; as that of the Eunuch, which as it was done by an extraordinary immediate call of *Philip* so to doe; so also there was a speciall reason thereof, the Lord intending thereby, rather by him to send the Gospel into *Ethiopia*, then to retain him in any other place, to joyn with his Church: And the Baptism of *Paul*, who as without the Ministery of the Word he was converted by the immediate voice of Christ, so he was baptized by the immediate call of *Ananias* so to do. Now let us proceed to consider what further is replyed.

Reply. *The seals Baptism and the Lords-supper are given to the Church, not onely in ordinary, but also extraordinary dispensation: True Baptism is not without the Church, but in it, an ordinance given to it. The Sacraments are the seales of the Covenant to the faithfull, which is the form of the Church tokens and pledges of our spirituall admittance into the Lords family. Hence it is inferred, that if the seales in extraordinary dispensation were given to the Church, and yet to members of no particular Church, then also in ordinary dispensation it may be so.*

Answ. 1 It will not follow; for first, if the Apostle in extraordinary cases baptized privately, will it follow that in ordinary dispensation it may be so? Secondly, if because the Ministery be given to the Church, and extraordinary Officers were not limited to particular Churches; will it therefore follow that in ordinary dispensations, Ministers ought not to be given onely to particular churches? Thirdly, as we have oft said, that seals belong *de jure* to all beleevers, as such, as members of the Catholick church, (they being given unto it firstly, as to its object and end) and all that are truly baptized, are baptized into it, and thus never out of it, as being tokens of our spirituall admittance into the Lords family both in ordinary and extraordinary dispensation; but doth it hence follow that actuall fruition of the seales (of which the que-

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stion is stated) may ordinarily be had or given to such as set loose from all societies? the Apostles had extraordinary power, being generall Pastors over all persons beleeving as well as Churches; and therfore at some times by speciall guidance of the Spirit they might doe that which ordinary Pastors may not do.

Secondly, *as the seals, so the Word of salvation preached and received, is a priviledge of the Church, &c. If by preaching be meant the giving of the Word unto a people, to abide and continue with them, and consequently the receiving of it at least in profession, then it is proper to the church of God.* Reply.

We grant, (in some sense) it is a priviledge, and proper to the Church so to have the Word; but this no way takes away the difference between the Seals and the Word, which the answer makes, *viz.* That the Word is not such a peculiar priviledge of the Church as the Seals, in that the one is dispensed not onely to the Church, but also to others for the gathering of them, which is not so in the Seals, for the Word of God received in *Corinth* abiding with them, professed of them, was not so peculiar, but an Idiot comming in might partake in the same, but not so in the Sacraments, 1 *Cor.* 14. Answ.

The Word makes Disciples, the Word given unto a people is Gods covenanting with them, and the peoples receiving this Word, and professing their faith in God through Jesus Christ, is the taking of God to be their God, the laws and statutes which God gave unto Israel, were a testimony that God hath separated them from all other people: the Word of reconciliation is sent and given to the world reconciled in Iesus Christ, and they that receive the Doctrine, Law, or Word of God, are the disciples, servants, and people of God. Reply.

In these words, and that which follows in the second Paragraph, there seems to be a double scope: First, to prove the Word proper to the Church; to which is answered afore. Secondly, that where-ever the Word of God is, there is the true visible Church; and so where the true Worship of God is, there is a mark of the Church, especially where it is received and confessed. To which we answer: Answ.

1. There is a covenanting between God and man, which is personall, and so whosoever receives the Word of Gods grace by faith sent unto him by God, enters into Covenant to be his, and that before he makes any visible profession thereof, and so every beleever is a disciple, a servant of God, and one of Gods people, but

but many thousands of these considered onely in this their personall relation to God, doe not make a visible Church, many such might be in the world, but no members of the visible Church, until they came and joyned to the Church of Israel of Old, or to the visible Churches in the New Testament.

2 There is a sociall or common covenanting between God and a people, to be a God to them, and they a people unto God in outward visible profession of his Worship; and so the Lord took *Abraham* and his seed into Covenant, and renewed that Covenant with them, as an holy Nation and peculiar people to him; and in this covenanting of God with a people, whereby they become a Church, there is required, first, that they be many, not one. Secondly, that these many become one body, one people. Thirdly, that they make visible profession of their Covenant with God really, or vocally. Fourthly, that this Covenant contain a profession of subjection to the ordinances of Gods Worship, wherein God requires a Church to walk together before him: and all these may be seen in the Church of Israel, who received Gods laws indeed, but so as they became one people to God, visibly avouched God for their God, received and submitted unto all the laws of his Worship, Government, and other Ordinances. And this is expresly or implicitly in every true visible Church, though more or lesse fully and purely.

Now if you intend such a covenanting of a people with God, by a professed receiving of his Word, and subjection to his Ordinances; we grant such to be true Churches, and to such the seals do belong; and therefore we willingly close with the Conclusion that follows, *They that have received the Word of salvation entirely, and have Pastors godly and faithfull to feed and guide them, they and their seed have right to the seals in order. And they that joyn together in the true Worship of God, according to his will, with godly and faithfull Pastors, they have right to the sacraments, according to Divine institution.* These conclusions we willingly embrace, and inferr, that if the seals belong to such a Church, then to particular Congregations. For where shall we finde a people joyning together with godly Pastors, but in such particular Assemblies? For we doubt not our Brethren doe disclaim all Diocesan Pastors, or Provinciall, &c.

Reply. *That there is now no visible Catholick Church in your sense, will easily be granted, &c.*

If

If this be granted in our sense, so that there be no such Catholick church wherein seals are to be dispensed; then it will fall to be the right and priviledge of particular Congregations, to have the seals in the administration proper to them; and so the cause is yeelded, but because there is so much here spoken of the Catholick visible Church, and so much urged from it, we shall refer the Reader to what is said before, onely one thing we shall note about the instance of *Athanasius*, that a man may be a member of the Catholick visible Church, but of no particular Society.

Reply. *You say it is evidenced, in that a Christian (as* Athanasius *for an example) may be cut off unjustly from the particular visible Church, wherein he was born, and yet remains a member of the Catholick visible orthodox Church.*

Answ. This case proves nothing; for look how such a Christian stands to the Catholick, so he stands to the particular Church: if he be unjustly censured, as he remains before God a member of the Catholick, so also the particular Church, for *clavis erranz non ligat*: and in respect of men, and communion with other Churches in the seals, if they receive him, being satisfied that he is unjustly cast out; they may receive him, not for his generall interest in the Catholick church, but in respect of his true membership in the particular Church, that unjustly cast him out: Whereas, if the Churches were not perswaded but that he were justly cast out of the particular, they ought not to admit him to seales, were he as Orthodox as *Athanasius* himself in doctrine, and as holy in his life.

Reply. *Though there be no universall Congregation, nor can be imagined, yet there are and have been many visible Assemblies or Societies, true Churches of Christ, to whom the prerogative of the seals is given, which have not been united and knit together into one Congregation or Society in Church-order. For every Society in Covenant with God, is the true Church of God. For what is it to be the flock, people, or sheep of God, but to be the Church of God? and where there is a Covenant, there is the people of God, &c.*

Answ. This assertion seems to us very strange to fall from that reverend and learned Author, being a foundation of many inconveniences and absurdities, and tending to overthrow the order of Christ in his visible Churches. For,

First, if this be so, that every Society in Covenant with God, be the Church of God, then men may set up as many Forms of

visible Churches as they please, (if the people be in Covenant with God visibly at least) the Archdeacon with his Commissary, Priests, Churchwardens, &c. being in Covenant with God, are a true Church: So the Diocesan Bishop in his Cathedrall with his Clergy, or any such Assembly, are the Church of God; or what other form soever men will devise, may goe for the Church of God, and to them belong the seals, and (you may as wel say) discipline, and all Ordinances of God, if they bee the true Church.

Secondly, upon this ground every company of godly Christians in Covenant with God, meeting in fasting, prayer, &c. are the true Church of God, and to them (as such) the seals belong, and sending for a true Minister of the Catholick church, they may have Baptism and the Lords-supper administred, and by the same reason discipline also: yea, if but two or three (as you say) being in Covenant with God, meet together in their travail at an Inne, &c. are the Church of God, especially every Christian family is the Church; for they professe the entire faith, joyn (daily) in prayer and thanksgiving, receive the truth of God to dwell amongst them, are in some measure obedient unto the commands of God, and in Covenant with God:

And therefore being the Church of God, why not call for a Minister, and have seals ordinarily dispensed to them?

Thirdly, upon this ground a company of Christian Women in Covenant with God are a Church, to whom the seales belong, and who sees not, how all orderly dispensation of Gods Ordinances, and the whole order of visible Churches in the Gospel would be overturned by this assertion? We verily beleeve this Author was far from admitting these things, but the Position it self will unavoidably enforce the same. Neither can we impute this assertion to any inconsiderateneese through heat of disputation. For if any shall maintain the personall Covenant of people with God to be sufficient to constitute visible Churches, and not admit a necessity of a more publick or generall Covenant explicite or implicite, whereby a company of Christians are made one people, joyning in one Congregation to worship God in his holy Ordinances, and walk together in his ways, they must of necessity acknowledge every Society in Covenant with God to be a Church, as here is said; and therefore admit all forms of Churches, and all Families, &c. to be Churches, and so bring in the confu-

confusion objected, which we desire may well bee considered.

All your Arguments stand upon that ground of personall covenant with God, which is too weak to bear up that conclusion, to make all such visible Churches to whom the seals belong, as the absurd consequences thereof shew.

These Reasons, and the Scriptures in the margent (some of them) will prove them fit matter for visible Churches, and that they have a remote right unto the seals of that Covenant, (which we grant) but they will not prove every Society of such to bee true Churches, having immediate right to have the seals dispensed unto them.

Fifthly, *If it be granted that the seals are the prerogative of particular visible Churches, known and approved Christians amongst us are members of such Churches, and so to be esteemed amongst you, &c. and every visible believer professing the pure entire faith, admitted to the right and lawfull participation of the sacraments, is a visible member of the true Church, if he hath neither renounced the Society, nor deserved justly to be cast out by excommunication, or Church censure, &c. And if known and approved Christians, members of our Churches comming to* New-England, *shall desire to have their children baptized, or themselves admitted to the Lords-supper, before they be set members amongst you; we desire to know upon what grounds from God you can deny them, if you acknowledge our Churches, Ministery and Sacraments to be true, (as you professe) and the members of the Church be known and approved, orderly recommended unto you.* Reply.

We grant all this here expressed for the substance, however some reasons spoken unto before intermixed we passe over, and to your question we frame a ready answer from your own words. For, first, you grant, that if such members have renounced that Society wherein they did partake of the seals, they are not to be reputed members of it; and this is generally the case of all approved Christians among us, who though they doe not so renounce the Churches that bare them, and gave them suck, as no true Churches; yet seeing they were grown so corrupt many ways, as they could neither enjoy some needfull Ordinances, nor partake in those they had without sin, they have therefore renounced and forsaken all further communion with them, and membership in them; and so by your own grant, neither themselves, nor the Churches here can take them as members of your Churches, to receive them under that respect. Answ.

Secondly, if any yet have not so far renounced those Churches they belonged unto, yet they are not orderly recommended unto us, which also you grant ought to be, and indeed otherwise we may oft receive persons justly excommunicate, or such as are no members of Churches any where, or otherwise under great offence, as frequent examples amongst our selves doe shew, though the Church may think well of such as offer themselves. What else follows in this Paragraph, is the same in substance, and much of it in words also, that we have answered before; and therefore we passe it over; and that of the Jewish Church we shall speak to after. As for that you desire leave to set down, and us to examine what may be objected against that we affirmed, That the distinct Churches named in the New Testament were Congregationall Societies; we shall consider as followeth:

Reply. *The number of beleevers were so great in some Cities, that they could not conveniently meet in one place as one Assembly to worship God according to his will, and for their edifying, as in Samaria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus.*

Answ. Although we expected not Objections in this case against the currant Tenent of our godly Reformers, *Baine, Parker, &c.* with whom we joyn; and we might refer you to them for answer to this beaten Objection of the Prelates; yet we are not unwilling to examine what is said in this digression. The Argument stands thus: If the number of beleevers were so great in some City, as could not meet in one Assembly to edification; then there was some other form of a Church besides Congregationall; But so it was in *Samaria, &c.* *Answ.* We deny the consequences, for when they grew to so great a number, they might fall into more Congregationall Churches, and so no other form arise from the multitude; but we suppose you mean of such a multitude as is called a Church; and therefore to answer to your Assumption, we deny that any such multitude of beleevers as is here called a Church were so great as could not meet to edification: And first concerning *Samaria.*

Reply. *That there was a Church gathered in Samaria, will not be denyed, for they received the Word, and were baptized; but that the Church in that City was onely a Congregationall Assembly, is more then can probably be concluded.*

Answ. We grant a Church or Churches were gathered in *Samaria*, and we accept your reason as good, because they received the Word,

Word, and were baptized, where (by the way) you grant what we pleaded for before, That the Apostles gathered Churches, when they baptized them: but that there was but one Congregationall Assembly, lyes not in us to prove, untill you prove that all the beleevers were called a Church; or one Church, which doth not appear in the whole story, *Acts* 8. nor any other where that we can finde; and it is very probable that as *Philip* converted and baptized so great a multitude at severall times, and gathered them into the Church or Churches as he baptized them, so he might gather severall Churches, as well as one, seeing that none doubt but that Congregationall Churches are an ordinance of Christ, what ever men contend for beside. And therefore be the number of beleevers in *Samaria* as great as you would have it, it proves nothing.

The Church at Jerusalem was one, and distinct, yet encreased to 3000, Reply.
then to 5000, &c.

Be it so, the increase was very great; yet so long as they are Answ.
called one distinct Church, it was one Congregation, *viz.* untill they scattering by the persecution about *Stephen*, *Acts* 7.8. which is evident by these two arguments. First, *Acts* 2. 41,&c. where we see the 3000 added to the 120. they have their communion together described: 1. In regard of their spirituall communion, to be in the Apostles doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and Prayer, verse 42. Secondly, in regard of their outward communion in the good things of this life; they had all things common, and sold their possessions, &c. verse 44, & 45. Now the manner of both parts of this communion in respect of time and place is described, verse 46. *viz.* in their spirituall duties, They continued daily with one accord in the Temple. And secondly, in respect of their outward communion in their States, They eat their meat from house to house; this latter requiring many tables and many houses to provide for them; so that although in their outward communion, it was in private houses, yet their spirituall communion it was with one accord in one place, *viz.* the Temple, where they had room enough; being the place erected for a Nationall Church; and having favour with all the people, were not interrupted therein by any persecution. We need not step out of our way to reply to all that is said against this reason. It is enough for us to note, that they daily with one

accord met, and that in the Temple, which is not answered by any [illegible].

2 This appeareth, *Acts* 6.1,5. where it is evident the election of Deacons was before, and by the multitude, verse 1. by the whole multitude, verse 5. and this was the last Church-meeting and Church-act we read of before their scattering; neither can it appear that the Jews and Grecians, whose Widows murmured were two distinct Congregations, but the contrary is evident, in that the Deacons were chosen all by the whole, and for the whole, not distinctly so many for this, and so many for that Church, as it was needful if they were two Churches. These proofs being so clear, the inconveniences objected are of no force, and sufficiently answered by many examples of as great Assemblies meeting ordinarily to edification; as beside the Auditory of *Chrysostome*, cited by others; the Assemblies of *Stepney* in *London*, *Yarmouth* in *Norfolk*, and others in our experience. *Beza*, a man not loving to hyperbolize, saith, that being in *Paris*, there met at a Sermon
* *Calvin Epist.* 332. * 24000. And of a Synodall Assembly that they received the Lords supper no lesse then 10000. *Beza Epist.* 65.

Reply. *Without question the number of beleevers at* Antioch *was not small, of which it is expresly said,* That a great number beleeved, *and* that a great multitude were added to the Lord by the preaching of Barnabas, &c. *and therefore we may think the Church rose to such a bignesse as could not well assemble in one Congregation*, Acts 11.21. & 14.27.

Answ. 1 In that place, *Acts* 11.21. the great number that beleeved, was the fruit of all the scattered Christians at *Phenice*, *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*; for the hand of the Lord was with them all, and their whole successe is summed up together, nothing said before of the other places.

2 Though *Paul* and *Barnabas* taught much people, yet it proveth not that this much people were converted to the Church.

3 Though much people were added to the Lord, yet doth it follow they were more then could meet in one Congregation? and if first Disciples were *there* called Christians, must it needs be for their number, and not rather for eminent likeness to Christ, with other specialities of providence?

4 It is expresly said, the Church was gathered together, *Acts* 14.27. which is not meant of the Elders onely, as if they onely could meet; for *Chap.* 15.30. *They gathered the multitude together*;

so

ſo that it was not ſuch a number but might meet together in one place.

The number of beleevers was great at Epheſus, where Paul preached two years; all that dwelt in Asia heard the word, a great door and effectuall was open to him, where the Shrines of Diana her Temple were in danger to be ſet at nought; when thoſe that uſed curious arts, burnt their books openly: which could not be done without great danger of the Church, unleſſe a great part of the City had beleeved, Acts 19. 10, 19, 27. Reply.

1 Be it ſo, that many were converted, and the Word grew mightily; this proves not that all who heard *Paul*, were of the Church of *Epheſus*, for then all *Aſia* ſhould be of that Church, (*Acts* 19. 10.) who did hear the Word both Jews and Gentiles; As for the danger of the Shrines, and *Diana*'s Temple to be ſet at nought, a little ſpark might kindle ſuch fears, and raiſe ſuch outcryes in the covetous Craftſmen, by whom the whole City was ſet in a ſuperſtitious uproare; our own experience may teach, how ſoon a prophane people will cry out againſt a faithfull Miniſter before he hath converted ten men in a City. Anſw.

2 That they could not burn their books openly without danger to the Churches, except a great part of the City beleeved, ſeems a ſtrange reaſon: as if beleevers durſt not profeſſe openly, except they had a great number to maintain them with club-law: open profeſſion in thoſe times even amongſt a few, was not wont to be daunted with the grim looks of perſecution.

3 And laſtly, we grant *Epheſus* might be a numerous Church, yet neither there, nor any thing that is ſaid from *Rev.* 2. 7. (*Hear what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches*) can perſwade us that it was any more then one Congregation, for that argues no more, that *Epheſus* was a compound of many Churches, then that it was compounded with all the other ſix Churches of *Aſia*; yea, the Churches of all the world; for what the Spirit ſpeaketh to one Church, is ſpoken for the uſe of all.

It is not eſſentiall to the Church to meet together in one place ordinarily, nor is the Society broken off by perſecution, when their meeting together in one place be interrupted. Reply.

It is true, one Church or Society by perſecution or otherwiſe, may meet in ſeverall companies; neither doe we ſay, that place, or meeting in one place, is properly eſſentiall to the Church, yet it is neceſſary both *præcepto & medio*, to be able at leaſt ſo to doe; for though it be not neceſſary to the unity of the Society Anſw.

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thus to meet together, yet it is necessary to the communion thereof in all Ordinances. It is not necessary to the unity of a Classicall Presbytery to meet ordinarily in one place, but unto the communion thereof it is necessary. When the Papists to maintain their private Masses, say, That place is but accidentall to the ordinance: And that Christians are not bound to the circumstance of place (as *Hardin* objects) any more, then to observe dayes, moneths, times, condemned as beggerly Elements by the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. As also, that all the faithfull are united together by the Sacrament, though they meet not in the same place, as the Ancients noted. How doth learned *Chamier* answer them? he tels them, *That although this or that particular place is not necessary, yet a place indefinitely taken is:* And that the *Sacrament is restrained to be administred in a place, because it cannot be administred but* conventu fidelium; *and this* conventus *must be in some place*: And he adds, *That although all the faithfull have communion in the Sacrament, though they meet not in one and the same place*; yet this (the faith) is to be understood of *spirituall*, not *sacramentall communion*; *Nunquam enim auditum, qui Hierosolymis erant, sacramentaliter communicasse cum iis qui Alexandriæ*: and therefore he thought communion in one place together necessary to Church-communion, as wee doe.

Chamier de Euchar. cap. 13.

Reply. Seventhly, *Seeing then both the seals in ordinary and extraordinary dispensation, &c.*

Answ. This, with that which follows, being but a recapitulation of the severall Replies made, we shall leave it to the judicious, having well observed our answer, to embrace or reject the Conclusion.

CHAP. VII.

Consid.

Reply To the second Consideration of the Answer.

THe Proposition is granted, That the dispensation of the Sacraments both ordinary and extraordinary, is limited to the Ministery; but in that you alledge for confirmation some things may be noted: 1. The first institution of Baptisme is not contained in that passage, but confirmed, for the seals were instituted before his death, &c.

Answ. The Proposition being granted, and the proof *Mat.* 28.19. being (we doubt not) pertinent in the Authors own judgment, as well

well as ours; Brotherly love might easily have passed over greater mistakes then the answer seems to have fallen into: for, by First institution here, we meant no more, then that it is the ordinance of Christ himself, instituted in that first time of all Divine ordinances. We were not so ignorant to think there was no use, and so no institution of Baptism before the death of Christ; and therefore this confutation might have been spared.

Secondly, *We see not how you can apply that Text*, Matth. 28 19. *to preaching by Office; which by your exposition is a dispensing of a fit portion to every one of the household, and it is plain the Apostles were sent to preach to every creature, &c.* — *Reply.*

As if that commission, *Matth.* 28. did not authorize them also, and require them to dispense fit portions to the Churches: did not the care of all the Churches lye on the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 11. 28. so also 1 *Cor.* 7, 17. were not Apostles given to the Church for the edifying of the body of Christ, &c. as well as other Officers? *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. and therefore this note also might well have been spared. — *Answ.*

Thirdly, *If under the power of the Keys you comprehend preaching by Office, dispensing seals, &c. we deny the power of the Keys to belong to the Church, or community of the faithfull, in those passages which speak of this power, the execution of this authority is given to them to whom the authority is committed.* — *Reply.*

This of the power of the Keys, and the execution thereof, was onely in the Answer touched by the way, to prevent the objection of some. — *Answ.*

1 It is well known that it is no new opinion to hold, that the Church is the first subject of the Keys, and to alledge *Matth.* 16. & 18. for the same, and therefore might as well have been set in the margent; many ancient Divines, and our own Modern, as *Fulke, Whittaker, Baine, Parker*, and others, as *Robinson*, if there were not a desire to possesse people with that conceit, that we goe in new ways with the Separatists alone.

2 We distinguish between power and authority: there is a power, right, or priviledge, as *Joh.* 1.12. which is not authority properly so called; the first is in the whole Church, by which they have right to choose Officers, *Acts* 6. & 14. receiving members, &c. Authority (properly so called) we ascribe onely to the Officers under Christ to rule and govern, whom the Church must obey. Now we grant that where authority is given, there power

to exercise it is given also, as *Mat.* 28. *Joh.* 20. &c. it is given to the Apostles and Ministers; and so where power is given to the Church, there power to exercise the same orderly is given also, as *Mat.* 18. 1 *Cor.* 5. 2 *Cor.* 2. 10.

Reply. *If the power of the Keys be given to the Church, the Apostles themselves must derive their authority immediately from the Church, and not from Christ; for the power must be derived from them unto whom it was given, &c.*

Answ. We deny your consequence, for the Lord may give power to his Church in all ordinary cases, and yet reserve to himself that prerogative to doe what he please immediately without the Church, as is cleare, that in this case he hath, first calling his twelve Apostles, *Mat.* 10. before he instituted the Church of the New Testament, after he was pleased to use the Ministery of the Church, *Acts* 1. to choose two, and take one of them immediately by a lot; and when *Paul* was called he appeared to him immediatly, and called him both to the faith, and to his Apostleship, whereby it is clear that their call is a reserved case.

Reply. *If Ministers dispense the seals as the stewards of Christ, from whom they receive their authority immediately; then the power of the Keys is not in the community of the faithfull; if as the servants of the Church, from which they derive their authority; then the Office of a Minister is not the immediate gift of Christ; nor the Minister so much the servant of Christ, as of the Church from whom he must receive Lawes, in whose names he must doe his Office, and to whom he must give account.*

Answ. This Objection will hold as strongly against any other subject of the Keys that can bee named, (as Classes, Synods, or Church Catholick) and therefore by this manner of reasoning the Lord Jesus must doe all things immediately himself in chooſing Officers, &c. or else his Ministers must receive Laws, doe all in the name of such as he delegates to that work of administration under him, and therefore let others look to answer this Objection as well as we: Our answer is briefly & plainly this, the Office is the immediate institution of Christ, the gifts and power belonging thereto are from Christ immediately, and therefore he ministers in his name, and must give account to him, 1 *Pet.* 5. and yet his outward cal to this Office, whereby he hath authority to administer the holy things of Christ to the church, is from Christ by his Church, and this makes him no more the servant of the Church, then a Captain (by the leave of the Generall) chosen by the Band

of

of Souldiers is the servant of his Band. Wee see in this reply here and elsewhere how ape men are to cast this *odium* upon this Doctrine, and to ranke us with Separatists in it, but it is easily wiped off and sticks as fast upon the Classes, Synods, Catholick Church, or any other subject of this power.

If the communitie of the faithfull have to doe in all matters of the body, to admit members cast out, make and depose Ministers, &c. by authority from Christ, wee cannot see how in your judgement the execution of the power of the Keys is concredited to the Ministers. *Reply.*

If the power, priviledge and liberty of the people be rightly distinguished from the authority of the officers as it ought, a dim sight may easily perceive how the execution of the Keys by the officers authoritatively may stand with the liberties of the people in their place *obedientially* following and concurring with their guides, so long as they goe along with Christ their King and his Lawes, and cleaving in their obedience to Christ dissenting from their guides, when they forsake Christ in their ministrations; if there need an ocular demonstration hereof, it is at hand in all civill administrations wherein the execution of Laws and of justice in the hands of the Judges and the priviledge power or liberty of the people in the hands of the Jurours. Both sweetly concurre in every case both civill & criminall; neither is the use of a Jury onely to finde the fact done, or not done, (as some answer this instance) but also the nature and degree of the fact in reference to the Law that awards answerable punishments; as whether the fact be simple theft, or burglary, murder or manslaughter, &c. and so in cases of dammages, costs in civill cases; whereby it appeares, that although the power and priviledge of the people be great, yet the execution authoritatively may bee wholly in the Officers. *Answ.*

Fourthly, *That which you adde, that God will not vouchsafe his presence and blessing to an Ordinance but when it is dispensed by those whom hee hath appointed thereunto, must be warily understood, or it may occasion errors and distractions not a few, &c.* *Reply.*

Wee shall not contradict your wariness in this case, for wee acknowledge a presence of God with his Ordinances administred by such as hee appoints, though some corruptions bee admixed, in the entrance and administrations; but wee doubt not the presence and blessing of God is more or lesse according to the purity or corruptions of the administration and participation of his Ordinances: but what need there was, or use of this note wee see *Answ.*

not, our words were sound, and safe enough, but it seemes your tenderneſſe of the ſtandings of Miniſters and Ordinances in *England* occaſioned this warineſſe, and wee deny not what you ſay, that Gods preſence, and bleſſing upon his ordinances diſpenſed by us gave ſome approbation to our ſtanding and to his Ordinances, the Lord mercifully paſſing over our many corruptions: but this will no way give allowance to the many groſſe corruptions, and defects which cleaved to our ſtandings, and adminiſtrations, nor to the continuance of any in ſuch corruptions after the diſcovery thereof.

Reply. Secondly, *As for the aſſumption, that Paſtors and Teachers are limited to a particular Church or ſociety, but that flock is not ever one congregationall aſſembly meeting in one place, neither the bond ſo ſtraight, whereby they are tyed to that one ſociety that they may not upon occaſion performe ſome miniſteriall act of office in another congregation, or to them that bee not ſet members of their proper aſſembly.*

Anſw. For clearing of the the aſſumption, that wee may give the more diſtinct anſwer, wee ſhall take leave to explicate our ſelves concerning the limitation of the Miniſtery to the Church, which it is like they who drew up the anſwer had formerly done, had the times then been as criticall as they are growne ſince.

1 When we ſay the Miniſtery is limited to a particular Church, wee doe not ſo limit it to a Congregation under her owne Preſbytery, as to exclude from communion in the ſeales, many Congregations ſtanding under one common Presbytery, as wee have formerly ſaid, we honour the reformed Churches of Chriſt Jeſus, and the godly members thereof.

2 When wee ſay the ſeales are limited to a particular Church or Congregation becauſe the Miniſtery is ſo limited; our meaning is not of that congregation onely whereof the Miniſtry is, but of any Congregation in generall.

3 When wee ſay that where a Miniſter hath no power, he may not do an act of power, this is to be ſo underſtood, that hee cannot performe ſuch an act, as an Officer over them or unto them as to his proper flock, the office being (as wee ſaid) founded in the relation betweene the Church and the Officer, ſuch a ſtated power as an Officer over his owne flocke, hee hath not to thoſe of other Congregations partaking in his owne Church, or in any act of his Office in another Church; yet an occaſionall act of power, or *precaria poteſtas*, charitatively to put forth an act of

his

his Office to those in an other church, over whom he is no Officer, wee see not but he may; but then this act of power is not towards them as over his owne flocke; for two things are cleare to us. 1. That an Officer of one Church, is no Officer over those of an other Church, as not being his proper flocke, for there being no Office of Pastour at large without power of Office, and the power that a Pastour hath over others, being by the election of those that chose him their Officer, who thereby become his proper flocke, hence he hath no power as an Officer over those of an other flock, unlesse he should ἀλλοτριεπισκοπεῖν.

That such an officer may put forth acts of his office towards those that are not of his proper flock. *E.g.* A Minister *ex officio*, & as a Pastor, not barely as a gifted man only may preach for the gathering in of those that are out of the Church, as well as for the edification of those that are within, *Ephe.* 4. 11, 12. and yet these are not his proper flock; it is the office of every Pastour to preach the Gospel, the meanes of converting, and therefore not onely to intend but to attend the conversion of men, (especially in preaching to his owne Congregation) for Christ hath sheep, (which are his flock) to bee gathered into his fold, which are not the Ministers proper flock, and the Pastour is the Minister of Christ, as well as the Pastour of his owne flock, and therefore he is to intend their gathering in as well as the good of his owne flock.

Againe, as he hath the Keys of Office by preaching the Gospel, to open the Kingdome of heaven to beleevers, so also he may *ex officio*, shut it against impenitent sinners and unbeleevers that reject his Doctrine, *Matth.* 16. 19. *Matth.* 10. 14. *Jer.* 1. 10. and yet these are not of his proper flocke.

Againe, a Pastour may administer the Seales, (which is an act of Office) to members of other Churches, in his his owne Congregation, (if they desire it) who yet are not his proper Flocke. Lastly, a Deacon of one Church may performe an act of his Office occasionally to those out of the Church, or the poore of another Church; yet be no Officer or Deacon of the other Church, and so 'tis here.

To illustrate this, A Captaine of a Band of Souldiers is an Officer onely over his owne Band, but it's an act of his Office to subdue enemies, and to bring in those that submit. A Steward is an officer over his Masters family, not over others: yet it's an act of his Office to provide for the intertainment

of Strangers that come to his Lords table.

Thus far it is cleare: But now whether a Minister may administer the Seales in another Congregation, is not so evident, yet wee will not deny but that occasionally being called thereunto by the desire of the Church, hee may lawfully doe the same, yet it's no foundation of a stated Presbytery out of a particular Congregation, for in all such acts the Church still keepes her power in her owne hands, while the Minister hath no authority, nor can put forth any act of his Ministery, but at her desire, and according to her owne necessity, neither doth this make a Minister a Pastour of the universall Church, for pastorall Office consists in taking charge of a people, and having power of authority to exercise the same towards his Church: But all that is said doth include neither of these, nor doth it follow that because they may set up a Presbytery over themselves in the same Church, that therefore they may combine & set up a Presbytery of many Churches, the first being their duty injoyned by Christ, not the other; for it is necessary for them to have such amongst them as may ordinarily feed, teach, watch over them, and rule them (the end of a Ministers Office) but it's not necessary so to submit to others, who may finde worke enough to feed and rule their owne, and therefore looke as it is not in the power of many Congregations to joyne together, to set one Pastour over them successively to feed them, (for so they make a Pluralist, and the Bramble the King of trees) nor yet in their power to set up (as in the first ambitious time) a ἐπίσκοπος with power over all singly, but under all joyntly, so neither is it in their power to set up many Pastours, who by their plurality of votes may wholly drowne that power of their owne.

Nor lastly doth it follow, that if they may desire the benefit and exercise of an others Office occasionally, that they may or should doe it constantly, no more then because they may desire sundry Ministers to preach amongst them every Sabbath for a time in the want of Officers, that therefore they should content themselves to live altogether without any of their owne.

Now for application of these things to the assumption of our argument. Although a Pastour (in the sense explained) may put forth acts of Office in another Congregation, or to others in his owne Congregation, yet will it hence follow, that a Minister may administer Seales to such as are of no Congregation? which is now the question.

Now

Now to remove those 2013 objections of Mr. *Ball*, which onely reach the question in hand, whereof the first is Reply the 8. *When ordinary Elders in the Primitive Church were to labour the comming of the Infidels to God, these being converted were to bee baptized of the Elders ordinarily in the Cities, though the number might bee so great as they could not well meet in one Congregation, nor bee subject to the same Pastour: and therefore either the Pastours must Baptize them, being no members, or they must remaine without Baptisme till they grow into a body, and choose Ministers to Baptize them, which is contrary to all precedents in Scripture.* *Reply.*

There is a third way which is passed over, that will ease the difficulty: *viz.* the Pastours might baptize them unto their owne Congregations so long as the numbers did not exceed beyond edification, and then dividing their numbers, might make divers Churches of one, and they call Pastours over them, and so wee see *Act.* 2. they added 3000. and after more, till they were scattered: and when peace was restored, *Act.* 9. the Churches were not onely edified but multiplied, *Verse* 3. and so the consequence of your 9. Reply is also taken away. *Answ.*

There is no precept or example in Scripture warrants the admitting of set members of one Congregation to the Seales in another, more then the admitting of approved Christians that are not set members, The Pastour is no more the Pastour of the one then of the other, neither of them set members, and both of them may bee members for the time being. *Repl.*

Wee have before shewed in the first consideration, that which warrants the dispensing of the Seales to confederating beleevers, as the way of the Gospel, and *Rom.* 16. 1. wee have a plaine example of orderly receiving the members of one Church to Communion in an other, being recommended thereunto by the Apostles, wee have not the like for any not in Church order at all; and though there be a parity in respect of particular relation with that Pastour and flock, yet that is a disparity in regard of immediate right that the one have to the ordinances of Christ and priviledges of a Church, which the other have not, being out of that order of Christ prescribed in the Gospel, in which order of a visible Church, visible ordinances are to be dispensed, as hath been proved before. *Answ,*

If a Synod consisting of sundry members of particular Churches, met together in the name of Christ about the common and publike affaires of *Reply.*

the

the Churches shall joine together in prayer, and Communion of the Supper, we can see no ground to question it as unlawfull, although that assembly bee no particular Congregation or Church, hath no Pastour over them, &c.

Answ. That such an assembly may pray together is no question, for every family may doe so: and that they may receive the Supper also in a right order, wee deny not, for meeting where there is a particular instituted Church, they may have Communion therewith in the Supper, being many as well as few, but whether they may as a Church (being no politicall body, but members of many Politicall Churches) administer Church ordinances proper to a Church, wee would see some reasons before wee can judge it lawfull so to doe: for though some doe account such a Synod *Ecclesia orta*; yet not properly such a Church as hath Ecclesiasticall power, authority and priviledge belonging thereto: they may consult and doctrinally determine of cases of that assembly, *Acts* 15. but further to proceed, we see no rule, nor paterne. Besides, if such an assembly of many Churches may administer Seales, why may not any other assembly of Church members or Ministers doe the same? and so this power will be carried without limitation, we know not how far, if they once depart from a particular Church.

CHAP. VIII.

Consid. 3.

Reply. *TO the third consideration, this whole reason as it is propounded makes onely against it selfe; who ever thought that the Seales were not proper to confederates, or the Church of God; of old visible beleevers in the Covenant of grace were of the visible Church, and in Church order according to the dispensation of those times, though not joyned to the Society of Abrahams family: to exclude Job, Melchisedeck, &c. because not of the visible Church, is welnigh a contradiction, and so to debarre known approved Christians, &c.*

Answ. That this reason makes not against it self, Mr. *Ball* himself hath cleared, when he stated our consideration truely in the words following, as will appeare, however here he somewhat troubles the waters needlessely, that the ground may not appeare, for there is nothing in our answer which deny *Melchisedech, Job, &c.* to bee of the visible Church according to the manner of those times, indeed

indeed wee instance in them as persons under the covenant of grace, not mentioning their membership in family Churches, as being enough for our purpose, if they had not right to Circumcision by vertue of their right in the covenant of grace, except they joyned to the Church at first in *Abrahams* family, and so after to the same Church in Israel; and the more speciall Church relation in *Abrahams* family was required to Circumcision, the stronger is the force of our reason, not the weaker. For so much the rather it followes, that seales are not to bee dispensed to beleevers (as such) though visibly professing the faith, except they joyne also to such a forme of the visible Church, to, or in which the seales are instituted and given.

Reply. *The true and proper meaning of this consideration is, that as Circumcision, and the Passeover were not to bee dispensed to all visible beleevers under the Covenant of grace, but onely to such as were joyned to Abrahams family, or the people of the God of Abraham, no more may Baptisme, and the Lords Supper be administred now to any beleevers, unlesse they be joyned to some particular Congregation.*

Answ. These words rightly stating the consideration wee leave it to any indifferent reader to judge, whether any way it make against it selfe, or whether there was any cause first to darken it as was done in the former passage.

Reply. *The strength of it stands in the parity betweene Circumcision and Baptisme, but this parity is not found in every thing, as your selves alledge. To unfold it more fully, wee will consider three things. First, wherein the Sacraments agree, and wherein they differ.*

Answ. It matters not in how many things the Sacraments differ, so they agree in the thing questioned, and though wee might raise Disputes and Queries about some particulars in this large discourse upon this first head, yet seeing here is a grant of the parity in the point now questioned, *viz.* Concerning the persons to whom Circumcision and Baptisme doe belong, wee shall take what is granted, and leave the rest. For thus it is said, *Circumcision and Baptisme are both Sacraments of Divine institution, and so they agree in substance of the things signified, the persons to whom they are to be administred, and the order of administration, if the right proportion be observed. Now that we hold the right proportion in the persons, may appeare,*

First, in that (as was granted) Circumcision sealed the entrance into the Covenant, but this Covenant was not simply, and onely the Covenant of grace; but that whole Covenant, that was made

with *Abraham*, whereby on Gods part they were assured of many speciall blessings, (whereof *Lot*, and others not in this Covenant with *Abraham*, were not capable) and whereby *Abraham* his seed, and family were bound for their part to be a people to God, and to observe this signe of the Covenant, which others in the Covenant of grace were not bound to.

Answ. Secondly, (as is granted) it was *Abraham*, and his household, and the seed of beleeving Jewes that were the persons to bee Circumcised, and therefore not visible beleevers, (as such) for then *Lot* had been included: so by right proportion not all visible beleevers as such, but such as with *Abraham*, and his family are in visible Covenant to bee the people of God according to the institution of Churches when, and to which the seale of Baptisme is given; and therefore as all family Churches but *Abrahams* being in a new forme of a Church were excluded, so much more such as are in no visible constituted Church at all.

Reply. Secondly, *As for the proposition it selfe, certaine it is, Circumcision and the Passeover were to bee administred onely to the visible members of the Church*, i. e. *to men in Covenant professing the true faith, but that in Abrahams time none were members of the visible Church, which joyned not to Abrahams family, wee have not learned.*

Answ. The proposition wee see is granted, yet it is obscured divers wayes, to which wee answer: First, whereas it is said these members of the Church were men in Covenant, professing the true faith. True, but where? not in any place, but in the Church of *Abrahams* family, and so after in the Church of Israel. Secondly, What faith? not onely faith in the Messiah for life, and salvation, but withall faith in the promises made to *Abraham*, and his seed with subjection to the visible worship of God in that Church, and to circumcision in particular. Thirdly, that there were no others of the visible Church besides *Abrahams* family, is not said, but being so it strengthens the argument, as was shewed before.

Reply. *In the first institution of Circumcision God gave it to Abraham, as the seale of the Covenant formerly made with him, but of any Church Covenant, whereinto Abrahams family should enter, we read not.*

Answ. Whether Circumcision sealed any new Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. or that before, *Gen.* 15. wee will not contend, neither is it materiall, bee it the same covenant hee entred into before for substance, yet it is evident, 1 That this covenant was not simply and onely the covenant of grace, but had many peculiar

liar blessings belonging to *Abraham*, and his posterity, and family contained in it. *Gen.* 12. and 15. 2 It is very considerable that God made this Covenant with *Abraham*, when hee cal'd him out of that corrupt state of the Church in *Ebers* family to worship God more purely according to his institutions, *Gen.* 12. 1. with *Josh.* 24. 2. Thirdly, this covenant, *Gen.* 17. is more explicatt, and full then before, and especially in that promise, which most properly concernes Church covenant, *viz.* that God would take *Abraham* and his seed into covenant with himselfe, even an everlasting covenant to be a God unto them, *Vers.* 7. and this in a speciall manner is that, which the Lord saith hee would now *establish* betweene *Abraham* and himselfe, *viz.* by this signe of the covenant, *Vers.* 9,10,11. Fourthly, this is the very covenant, which the Lord renewed with *Abrahams* seed afterward, when hee established them to bee a Church or people to himselfe, as is evident, *Deut.* 29. 12, 13. this the Lord is said oft to remember, *viz.* to remember his covenant with *Abraham*, when hee visited his seed with any mercy: *Exod.* 6. 5,6,7,8. *Psal.* 105. 8,9. and therefore it must needs bee a Church covenant. Fifthly, as *Gen.* 17. the Lord instituted a visible token, and seale of this covenant, so hee strictly enjoyned the observation of the same in all the seed and family of *Abraham*, and that in all their generations: all which things especially joyntly considered make it evident, that *Abraham* and his were not onely a people, but *established a people* to God in a Church covenant, and that the same covenant, which was the foundation of the nationall Church of God, that was after in his posterity, and to this covenant the seale of Circumcision was added.

Melchisedeck, Lot, Job might bee circumcised, though wee reade not of it, (as wee read not that John Baptist, or the Apostles were baptized) or if they were not circumcised, it may bee that institution was not knowne to them, or they were not required to joyne to Abrahams family, and if they had, they should have transgressed, and so the reason was not, because they were not in Church order, but because Circumcision was appropriated to Abrahams family in some peculiar respects. *Reply.*

Though wee reade not of the administration of Baptisme to *John* Baptist, the Apostles, and many others, yet wee reade of a rule that required it of them, and it was a part of that righteousnesse, of which the Lord Jesus saith to *John*, Thus it becommeth us to fulfill all righteousnesse, Matth. 3. 15. not for the institu- *Answ.*

tion of Circumcision did bind *Lot*, *Job*, &c. yet that they were forbidden to joyne to *Abrahams* family, and so bee circumcised, wee cannot say; seeing afterwards Proselytes were received into the same Covenant and Church, and so circumcised.

Secondly, that it was so appropriated to *Abrahams* family, as that it was unlawfull for them to joyne to *Abrahams* covenant, and be circumcised, this is more then can bee shewed; or if *Lot*, *Melchisedeck*, *Job* were excluded, yet out of question *Abraham* might and did enlarge his family, and so might take in proselytes visible beleevers in the covenant of grace, and circumcise them, and so still the appropriating of circumcision to the Church, and Covenant of *Abrahams* family, doth not weaken, but strengthen the argument, in as much as no visible beleever in the Covenant of grace might partake of the seale but by joyning in visible covenant with that Church to which it was given.

Thirdly, suppose *Job*, *Lot*, &c. and their families were circumcised, (as *Junius* alledgeth *Jerome* for it) yet how will it appeare it was not by taking hold of the Covenant of *Abraham*, to which Circumcision was applyed? yet it seemes more probable, that *Lot*, and other families in *Abrahams* time were not partakers thereof, God intending (as the effect shewes) not to establish them nor theirs to bee his people, as by Circumcision hee established *Abraham* and his seed; as for *Iob*, if hee were of *Abrahams* seed, and had Circumcision hereditarily *à materno, paternoque sanguine*, (as some thinke) yet this makes nothing against the argument wee have now in hand.

Answ. *After the Church of the Iewes was constituted (when wee cannot imagine any Church amongst the Gentiles) wee finde none must bee admitted to the Passeover that was not circumcised, but nothing was required of a stranger, but that hee professe the true faith, and avouch the God of Abraham to be his God, which must be done before hee could be reputed a visible beleever, or under the covenant of Grace.*

Reply. If any doubtfulnesse can bee raised about the Church in *Abrahams* family, yet the case is so cleare in the following story of the Church, as you must needs grant the proposition, (as you do) and the Church of the Jewes is still but the same Church, that was in *Abrahams* house, and the covenant the same, for *Gen.* 17. God established the Covenant with him and his seed for an everlasting Covenant to be a God unto them; and in *Egypt* the Lord challenges them as his owne, his first borne, &c. and therefore

there

there is the same reason of circumcision, first and last in respect of the Persons, that had right unto it, but say you nothing was required to circumcision, but to professe the faith. But we demand first, What was it to avouch the God of *Abraham* to be his God? Was it not to subject himselfe to all the Statutes, Commandements, and judgements of God in his Church to walke in them? as is cleare: *Deut.* 26. 17. Was there not the same Law for the stranger, and the home-borne? Secondly, Where must they professe this faith, and avouch this God? Was it in any place where they dwelt, and so might they circumcise themselves? must not this bee done amongst, and before the people of God in his visible Church? whence such were called Proselytes, and reckoned of the Common-wealth of Israel, *Esay* 56. 3, 4, 5, 6. And is not all this to joyne themselves to the visible instituted Church before they were circumcised? Lastly, it is not true that no man could be reputed a visible beleever before hee did all this. That which followes pag. 40 is answered before.

If Lot, Job, &c. were not circumcised, there is not the like reason for Circumcision, and baptisme in this particular. — *Reply.*

The force of the consideration doth not depend upon the likenesse of reason betweene the persons to be circumcised and baptized in every respect, but in this, that as Circumcision and the Passeover were given onely to visible members of that instituted visible Church, and therefore so in this case of baptisme, and the Lords Supper: now therefore if you could alledge many more different reasons betweene *Lot, Job, &c.* that were not circumcised, and those not to bee baptized, it would little availe in the case, but wee shall consider your differences particularly. — *Answ.*

First, If ever circumcision was appropriated to Abrahams family, and might not be communicated to other visible beleevers, it was in the first institution, but in the first institution of baptisme, it was not so observed, that beleevers should bee gathered into a Christian Church, and then baptized. Mat. 3. 7. *John baptized such as came to him, confessing their sinnes, the Apostles baptized Disciples, such as gladly received their doctrine, &c.* — *Reply.*

There is no such disparity in this as is objected, for *Abrahams* family was in Covenant before Circumcision was given, onely the Covenant was more fully explained and confirmed: and so when *John* baptized, hee baptized the members of the Jewes — *Answ.*

Church in Covenant before, to whom hee was sent to turne the heart of the fathers to the children, &c. and to prepare a people for the Lord, and baptisme was then given to the Church of the Jewes with reference to so many as would receive the doctrine of *John*, concerning repentance and remission of sinnes by faith in the Messiah now come amongst them, and therefore Christ himselfe, and his Disciples remained yet members of that Church.

Secondly, Though the visible Kingdome of Christ was not yet to bee erected in Christian Churches, till after Christs death and Resurrection, whereby hee did put an end to the Jewish worship, and therefore no Christian Churches could bee gathered by *John*, yet there was a middle state of a people prepared for the Lord, gathered out of the Jewish Church, which according to that state were made the Disciples of *John*, by solemne profession of their repentance or conversion to God, and acknowledgement of Christ the Lambe of God already come, to whom the seale of baptisme was appropriated. As for the instances, *Act.* 2.37. *&c.* and 8.37. and 10.47,48. they are spoken to before in the first consideration.

Reply. Secondly, *Lot, Job, &c. were not bound to joyne to Abrahams family, and bee circumcised, but now all visible beleevers are bound to seeke baptisme in an holy manner.*

Answ. First, This difference makes little to the point in hand, it is enough, that all that would be circumcised were bound to joyne to that Church, and so now. Secondly, in after times no doubt every true proselyte fearing God was bound to joyne to that church, as well as now; and if now all visible beleevers be bound to professe their faith, and seek baptisme in an holy manner, why should they not bee bound to joyne to some visible Church, and seeke it there, (as well as of old?) yea where should they professe their faith, but in the visible Churches, as the Proselytes of old did?

Your third difference is oft pressed, and answered before.

Reply. Fourthly, *If Circumcision bee appropriated to the family of Abraham, it is because that Covenant was peculiar to Abrahams posterity, namely, that Christ should come of Isaac, but baptisme is the Seale of the Covenant of Grace without peculiarity or respect.*

Answ. This difference is of little moment, neither will it hold, for first, though that, and other promises had a speciall eye to *Abrahams*

home family, yet Circumcision sealed the righteousnesse of faith, *Rom.* 4. to them being in visible Covenant with the Church, as baptisme now doth. Secondly, this peculiar respect you speake of, no way hindereth the joyning of many servants to *Abrahams* family, and Covenant, nor any prosel ytes to the Church afterward of any nation, no more then now in respect of baptisme. Thirdly, the true reason was, because although the Covenant was made with others, yet not established, nor enlarged towards them; and hence if they would partake of such a Covenant, they must joyne in this; which also is the glory of the rich grace of Christ shining forth in Church-Covenant with all that will become a people to him to this day.

The first difference is answered in the first and second.

CHAP. IX.

Consid. 4.

To the fourth consideration, first, Men are capable of Church censures, either as having power to dispense them: or as being subject unto them, &c. In the second sense, many are capable of Church priviledges, who are not subject to Church censures: as the children of Christian Parents are capable of baptisme, and approved members of any true Church are capable of Seales in other Congregations amongst you, who are not subject to the censures of the other Congregation, spiritual Communion in publike prayer, whereof visible beleevers (not in Church order) are capable, but not subject to common censures in your sense. Reply.

This distinction is needlesse: our meaning is plaine in the second sense, and therefore wee say nothing to what is objected against the first. To the instances objected against the proposition in the second sense, wee answer first concerning the Infants of Church-members, they are subject to censures, whensoever they offend the Church, as others are, though so long as they live innocently, they need them not. Answ.

Secondly, Members of any true visible Church are subject, and so capable of censure, (though not in another Church) which is not in the proposition. 2. Also they are capable of censures mediately by and in that other Church, if they there offend: for that Church may admonish and prosecute the admonition in the Church to which they belong, and refuse society with them, if they repent not, which cannot bee said of such as are

not

not members of any visible Church, who cannot be prosecut ed to excommunication in any place.

Thirdly, Publike prayers of the Church, though they bee an ordinance of Christ, and the Church have a speciall Communion in them, in which respect others do not share, yet they are not a priviledge or peculiar ordinance, wherein none but the Church may share, for an Heathen or Infidel may hear the word and joyne in the prayers, being *cultus naturalis*, saying Amen unto the same; which cannot be said of seales and censures, being *cultus institutus*.

Reply. Secondly, *A Person baptized, is not baptized into that particular Congregation onely, but into all Churches, and in every particular Church hath all the priviledges of a baptized person, and so to be esteemed of them. Now the priviledge of the baptized person, walking in the truth, and able to examine himselfe, is to bee admitted to the Lords Supper, as all circumcised persons had right thereby to eate the Passeover in any society, where God should choose to put his name there, Exod. 4.47. Deut. 16. 1, 1.*

Answ. This seemeth to touch the question it selfe, rather then the proposition of this fourth consideration: but wee shall answer to it as it stands. 1. Here you grant that a person baptized, is baptized unto a particular Congregation: which wee accept as a yeelding of the question unawares. 2. If you meane, that such hath a liberty of Communion in a way of brotherly love in all Churches where he comes, wee grant, (so farre as nothing in him justly hinder) but if you meane that hee is baptized into all Churches, so as to challenge a right of Membership in them all, wee deny it, as a position that would take away all distinction of Churches, as wee have formerly shewed. 3. We deny that the Lords Supper is the priviledge of a baptized person, able to examine himself, & walking in the truth as a baptized person, for then a Papist converted to the truth, able to examine himselfe, hath a right to the Lords Supper, in every Church, before he make any profession of his conversion, and faith in any particular Church, for hee may bee such a baptized person. And we may say the like of an excommunicate penitent. 4. We grant that a baptized person is not onely baptized in to that particular Church whereof hee was first a member: For if it bee a seale of his initiation into that particular Church onely, then he must bee rebaptized as oft as hee enters into another, but hee is baptized (in the sense formerly shewed) into the whole mysticall Body of Christ, and hence hath *jus ad rem*, or a remote right

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unto the priviledges of the Church every where, but that therefore he hath immediate right to the fruition of all, when he is severed from that particular church wherein he was baptized, that follows not: for as he had this latter right in the first Church wherein hee was baptized, so he must have it in any of the Churches of Christ afterward; now if in the first Church the fruition of ordinances came by orderly joyning to it: so it must be afterward, for as wee said before, such as the communion is, such ought to be the union, he that would have politicall communion with the politicall Churches of Christ, must be some where in politicall union with them, otherwise one may have communion in all Churches & yet never unite himself to any one, which loose walking we are perswaded Christ Jesus will not allow. 5 The similitude from a circumcised person will not hold. First, because there is no parity between severall families in the same Church, and severall Churches in the New Testament, but rather severall seats of communicants in the same Church answers, severall families eating the passeover in the Church of the Jewes. Secondly, an Edomite circumcised though he were converted, and acknowledged the true God in his owne country never so fully, yet might not eate the passeover till he joyned to the church of *Israel* as all other Proselytes did: & so is it here.

Reply. *Thirdly, there is not the same reason of every Church priviledge; one may have right to some who may not meddle with others, as members of one Church may joyne in hearing and prayer with another Church: but not medale in election and ordination of their Teachers, and therefore the proposition is not so evident to bee taken without proofe, that they have no power to admit a beleever into communion in any Church priviledge, who have no power to excommunicate.*

Answ. What is here objected from the liberty or restriction of Church members in another Congregation, is answered before in the first objection, and therefore the proposition may stand good for all that is here said. 2 That which is set down as the proposition, is neither the same with that in our reason, nor any way allowed by us; for wee speake not here of power to admit, but of the right to bee partakers: neither doe wee deny a power in officers to admit members of other Churches to the seales, though they have no power to excommunicate them. 3 If our proposition seeme to need proofe: the reason of it is at hand, because those that are the peculiar priviledges or proper priviledges or proprieties of the Church, as seales and censures being of the same nature, *viz.* outward ordinances of Christ ordained by him for the

edification of his Church and joyntly given to his Church: and therefore looke to what Church hee hath given the one, hee hath given the other also: if the one, *viz.* censures, bee given to the Church of a visible Congregation, then the other: they are all (both seales and censures) contained in the keys which are given to the visible instituted Churches of the New Testament: not to the Catholick (as such:) for a godly man justly cast out of the particular Church, yet cannot bee cast out of the Catholick.

Reply. *That visible beleevers baptized into a true Church, professing the true faith, and walking in holy obedience, and their seed should be judged such as are without in the Apostles sense, because they are not externally joyned as set members to some peculiar Congregation in Church Covenant, is affirmed, not proved.*

Answ. Comming to the assumption of our argument it is expressed (according to the frequent manner in this Reply) in such termes as it is not affirmed by us, and therefore if it want proof, blame not us: our assumption is, Such as are not in Church Covenant are not capable of Church censures: where by being in Church covenant wee meane either implicitly or explicitly, membership in any true Church, as in our answer wee expresse to prevent mistakes: and this is proved from 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. and in applying hereof wee doe not affirme that such are *simply without* in the Apostles sense, but *in some respect onely*, viz. in regard of visible church Communion.

Reply. First, *It doth oft fall out that the true members of the Catholick Church and best members of the orthodox Church, by a prevailing faction in the Church, may bee no members of any distinct society, and shall their posterity be counted aliens from the Covenant, and debarred from the Sacraments, because their parents are unjustly separated from the inheritance of the Lord?*

Answ. This objection is before answered in the first consideration, where was given the instance of *Athanasius*, and it is answered by the Reply it selfe in the next words, Surely as parents unjustly excommunicated, doe continue still visible members of the flock of Christ (understand that particular Church out of which they are cast,) so the right of Baptism belongs to their Infants: which being so, they are not without that Church, though debarred unjustly of the present communion with it, unlesse he renounce that Church, or other.

Reply. Secondly, *If such Churches renounce it as are no members of a politick spirituall fellowship be without, then the members of one Church are without unto another, &c.*

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This objection wee have had and answered oft before. In a word, there cannot bee the like reason, no not in respect of that other Church, who may in a due order of Christ persecute the censures against them, though not compleatly amongst themselves, which cannot bee said of such as have not joyned themselves to any Church; and therefore wee deny that the Apostles reason was because they were without to *Corinth*, but without to all Churches. *Answ.*

Thirdly, *(The fornicators of this world) doe they not explaine whom the Apostle pointeth unto by the title of being without Verse the 10. 11. such as had not received the Covenant of grace?* *Reply.*

Wee never thought otherwise but that the fornicators of this world and the heathen are most properly without in the Apostles sense; but if our words bee observed, that in *a certaine respect*, or as our words are, *in regard of visible Church communion*, such as are in no Church society are said to bee without, what great offence have wee given? For first, is not a godly man (if justly excommunicate) without in this sense. Secondly, doth not the Apostle *John* expresly call them without that forsooke the fellowship of the Church, 1 *John* 2. 19. saying they went out? Thirdly, were not the Catechumeni of old in this respect without, and the lapsed in times of persecution, and the like, who (in those zealous and severe times of Church discipline) were not onely said to bee without, but stood without, though weeping and praying as penitents at the Church doores, sometimes for two or three yeeres? and after this degree of preparation for entrance into the Church which they called ὑποπίπτοντες, there were three more before they were received to the Lords Supper: which severity though wee approve not, yet it may mollifie the mindes of the godly learned that are apt to bee offended at such a word from us. Fourthly, our Saviour himselfe expresly saith (and that not onely of those of no Church) but such as were even of the visible Church, and his ordinary hearers, that many of them were ἔξω or men without: and therefore this application of 1 *Cor.* 5.12. need not bee called insolent, or raise such an hubbub abroad, as wee perceive it doth. *Answ.*

Fourthly, *Church order is necessary wee deny not, but that a man should bee a constant set member of a particular society by Covenant to make him a member of the visible Church, or to give him title or interest to the publike order, this is not taught of God.* *Reply.*

This is but a bare denyall of the position it selfe, but what is meant by publike order wee know not: or where the order of Christ (which is granted to bee necessary) can bee found but in particular Churches, wee are yet to learne, neither is it anywhere taught in this Reply, and wee would gladly learne how that Church should orderly deale with such a man in case of offence that is of no particular Church.

Reply. Fiftly, *Paul divides all men into two rankes, the first and greater without, the last and lesser within, but that beleevers, &c. and their children should be reckoned without, we read not in any Scripture, but in Scripture phrase hereticks themselves are within.* 1 John 2. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 19.

Answ. All that is said in this objection except the last clause, is but a repeated denyall of the conclusion in other words: to the objection about Hereticks within, wee grant they are within till cast out or gone out of the Church, 1 John 2. 19. and if gone out, how are they within? and so if an orthodox professor will frowardly forsake all Churches and live alone, or among the heathen, how is hee within? we speake onely in generall.

Reply. Sixtly, *This hath not beene beleeved in the Church?*

Answ. Wee are not bound in every thing to be of the Churches faith, and what wee have said before may satisfie here.

Reply. Seventhly, *Without are Dogs, &c.* Rev. 22. 15. *not such as are faithfull, holy, &c.*

Answ. True, properly such are without, not these, yet in some respects (as hath been said) others also may be without, as such as forsake the Church, &c. as was before said more fully.

Reply. Eighthly, *They that are without in the Apostles sense are Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but we hope you will not passe such rash censure upon the brethren who bee not gathered into the society as set members.*

Answ. To say some beleevers may bee without in some respect, is farre from such a censure: the Scripture saith of Israel in their corrupt estate, and defect of the Ordinances of God, that they were a long time without God, without Law, without a teaching Priest, yet that hard expression doth not equall them with the heathen, much lesse to say some beleevers are without the visible Church in regard of visible Church communion, and wee judge no otherwise of such then of our selves when wee were in the like case.

Ninthly,

Ninthly, *Let this interpretation stand, and bee shall bee without also that is not subject to the censures of the community of the particular combination, few or many, without, or with Officers, and so all the reformed Churches that ascribe the Keyes to the Presbytery, or Classis, and not to the community, and some amongst your selves (if not most) shall bee without also.* Reply.

And therefore wee cannot thinke that approved Christians desiring seales are either without or not capable of Church censures: if they offend, though no set members, for desiring seales, they put themselves under the ordinances for a time, and may be proceeded withall as offending members.

This objection hath no colour without extreame straining of our application of 1 *Cor.* 5.12. seeing wee never limited the position to Churches of the same judgement, or in like degree of order to ours; it is onely a forced *odium* which is cast upon us, but wee can beare moreat our brethrens hands, neither doe we know any Church or elder that ascribes the power of the Keys to the Presbytery or Classis, excluding the community amongst us. Answ.

Secondly, for that objection that such put themselves under the ordinances of Christ for the time; if with profession of faith and subjection to the government of Christ, they desire seales, it is somethimg; but that the very desiring of seales doth include such a subjection in it selfe, being but for this or that act of administration, wee cannot understand; but let this bee really made good, that desiring seales it being a way, that subjects themselves to the Church as members, and the case will bee issued, being understood of such approved Christians as the position speakes of.

Lastly, to proceed against such as are not members, or of another Church, as with an offending member of our owne, is not much unlike the proceedings of *Victor* in his contentious time or may sow the seeds of such usurpations, which wee leave to the godly wise to consider of.

Tenthly, *If upon good reason a passage of Scripture can bee cleared to prove that for which it was never alleadged by any writer, wee are not to except against it for want of mans testimony, onely in such cases our reasons must bee convincing, but for the exposition of this Text wee have not observed one substantiall ground or approved author to bee alledged.* Dr. Ames *shewing the necessitie of Christians joyning themselves to some peculiar Church giveth this reason*; Quoniam alias fieri non potest quin conturbentur signa illa quibus fideles ab infidelibus discerni possunt, 1 Cor. 5.12. *But herein Dr.* Ames *manifestly sheweth that by* Reply.

themwithout, heathens and unbelievers must be understood, and not believers, though of visible society for the time; for thus wee conceive hee argueth. The signes whereby the faithfull are to bee discerned from unbelievers must not bee confounded: but unlesse Christians make themselves actuall members of a Church, the signes whereby the faithfull are discerned from unbelievers, will bee obscured and darkned: and if this be his reason, how can that Text bee alledged unlesse by men without, infidels bee understood?

Answ. First, That we have reasons to alledge it in that sense and respect declared, may appeare by our answers to your objections.

Secondly, That wee have one approved authour so alleadging it, *viz.* Doctor *Ames*, shall appeare in cleering his meaning from your objections. 1. Grant that by men without (according to Doctor *Ames* his reason) Infidels be understood by the Apostle, yet how shall the signes discerning believers from unbelievers, bee confounded by such as joyne not to some particular Church, if those believers doe not in some respect stand without amongst unbelievers? and the consequence is so plaine that the owne Syllogisme whereinto you cast his argument would have concluded so much, if it had been suffered to speake out in the conclusion. For in stead of saying, except such joyne to some Church, the signes will be darkned and obscured, the reason rightly concluded would have said (*fieri non potest*) it cannot bee but the signes will bee confounded: and therefore in his judgement it is unavoidable that such mix themselves with unbelievers, that are without indeed properly in the Apostles sense.

Reply. *Againe, Doctor Ames, lib. 4. cap. 17. speaking of Infants to be received, saith it is required, first, that they be in the Covenant of Grace by outward profession, &c.*

Answ. What you alledge here out of Doctor *Ames*, wee confesse sheweth that hee was very large in his charity about the baptizing of Infants, extending the same to the child of a Papist, &c. but it may seeme by some passages that hee understood by profession of faith, such as live in the visible Churches, and lookes at the child of a Papist as one of a visible Church for substance, though so exceedingly corrupt: but all this do not disprove that he understood 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. otherwise then hath been said.

What you alledge out of his second Manuduction concerning the Churches of *England* we consent unto, neither doe wee deny

seales

seales to any, if they demand them as members of any true Church in England, and in an orderly way.

CHAP. X.

Consid. 5.

TO the first consideration, If it bee repugnant to divine institution to admit of approved Christians lawfully baptized, walking in the faith, members of the visible Churches, and partakers of Church priviledges amongst us, to the Lords Supper, or their children to baptisme, because they bee not entered into Church-fellowship according to your order, then it is unlawfull though no such evill consequences are to bee feared, but if by accident some abuse should fall out, the evill is to bee prevented by all lawfull meanes, but the faithfull are not to be debarred utterly of the order of God, wherein they have right and title by his free grant and gracious institution. Reply.

Wee cannot but still complaine of this liberty, which is taken in changing the termes of the question, First: that clause, Members of visible Churches, is not in the position, nor is it maintained by us in that sense, neither doe wee limit Church-fellowship to our order, (as it is called) but acknowledge Churches defective in matters of order, (as was said) in the answer: and therefore it is an apparent wrong to us and to the readers, so oft to put in such things as are not in the controversie. Answ.

Secondly, If it bee unlawfull by divine institution, may not evill consequences bee added, and if both hold, are not our reasons the more strong?. What needeth then such a Reply?

Thirdly, We have oft granted a remote right, but next and immediate we still deny, and wee conceive no other order of God in his Churches to prevent such evils, then by joyning to the instituted Churches of Christ?

Seals may bee prophaned when the dispensers cannot helpe it: but here is no feare or danger of such consequences necessary to follow: for wee speake not of all sorts, at randome, but of Christians professing the faith intirely, lawfully baptized, knowne and approved to the wise and judicious visible members of the Churches amongst us sufficiently knowne to you, or orderly recommended, &c. Reply.

The feare and danger in this case is more then (so farre off) can easily bee discerned, though the limitations bee good in them- Answ.

themselves, yet the application of this description in the first part of it would open a doore wider then many can imagine, for many such (in the judgement even of the wisest) comming into this state of temptatations prove farre otherwise, (even your selves being Judges, if you were here) wee suppose the experience of the discoveries God hath made in these late trials of *England*, amongst forward professors, will teach our brethren to consider how many professors may prove here. Yet secondly, if you add such as retaining their membership in your Churches, are recommended unto us by your Churches, or by known godly Ministers, wee can then according to order receive them, and avoid the confusion and inconveniences wee objected. Thirdly, if also it be taken into the description, knowne and sufficiently approved of our selves, then the doore is open to them to the communion of the Church and all the priviledges thereof, though they cannot settle in the place of their present abode, and this way of order would prevent the inconveniences: but if wee come to put a difference any other way, wee cannot avoid it but great offence will be given to many, and the inconveniences objected in some degree at least will follow here with us, and it may be much more in some other places.

Rep'y. *You professe high respect to your brethren in Old* England, *but it seemes you judge them insufficient to give you orderly testimony of the sincerity of approved Christians well known and living amongst them, which two cannot well agree.*

Answ. This Position holds forth no such judgement of the insufficiency of our Brethren in the case, neither have we shewed it by rejecting such orderly testimony that we know.

Reply. *Wee speake not of such, who against light refuse to professe subjection to the Gospell of Christ, or to joyne to some approved Church, &c.*

Answ. Neither doe wee impute that to all that joyne not unto us, but our meaning is, that under such a description of approved Christians, we shall bee necessitated to admit of some, if not many such.

Reply. *No question but many have been admitted by the Church, who in truth are much too light, and some refused, who are better deserving then they that cast them off.*

Answ. Beeit so, that through personall failings, and weakneſse of discerning, it may and doe fall out sometimes, yet this no way hinders, but that all lawfull meanes to prevent the same may and ought

ought to be used, and this we may before the Lord professe, that the purpose and desire of our hearts are, as well to embrace the weakest humble Christian, as to keepe out the proud Pharisee: and wee have seen a gracious presence of Christ in his Churches, blessing our indeavours therein, whatsoever any discontented persons returning back, may clamour to the contrary.

CHAP. XI.

Consid. 6.

TO the sixt consideration, this conclusion is not to the question propounded: for wee speake of such as cannot, not of such as refuse to joyne themselves to the Churches; or if they doe not joyne, it is not out of contempt, or wilfull neglect, but for lacke of opportunity, or through their default, that should admit them, but doe not. Reply.

The learned Authour here wholly mistakes the conclusion of this argument; the conclusion is plaine and expressed with the ordinary note, *Ergo* no christian can expect by the appointment of God, to partake in the seales, till he hath joyned himselfe in Church-fellowship, and in the call of the Minister, and this is fully to the question propounded: and wee marveld it should not be observed, but the last words of the answer should bee put in stead of it, which are onely a secondary deduction from the former, as an absurdity, which may follow: if the other be not granted. And yet hence occasion is taken to charge us with injurious and tyrannical dealing toward such as are not admitted, which we leave to the Lord to judge of, and of us. You say, you accuse not the discretion of our Churches, but impute it to the rashnesse of the zealous multitude, but if it were so practised, as is conceived, the Churches and their guides should shew little wisedome, and faithfulnesse to the Lord, and the soules of his people. Answ.

When a reason is demanded of your judgement, why you debarre approved Christians from the seales, and we dislike it, you should put this note upon them, as if against light they refused orderly to subject themselves to the Gospell of Christ. What warrant you have thus to censure, what use of this manner of dispute, we leave it to your godly wisedome to judge. Reply.

Wee are heartily sorry that this reverend man of God, out of a meere and palpable mistake of the conclusion of the dispute, should Answ.

runne out to condemne us for so much censoriousnesse of others without cause, whether our manner of dispute bee here so without use, wee leave to the judicious reader to judge. And that wee are far from such censures of godly approved Christians amongst us, wee can approve our selves to God, and the consciences of many that live amongst us, wee doe not say that all who doe not joyne with us, doe refuse against light, yet wee finde it true too oft, that forward professors in *England* here discover evidently an heart refusing against light to submit to Gods ordinances, and therefore wee had cause to say, it were unreasonable such should have equall liberty with others.

Reply. *In the consideration it selfe there are many propositions couched to be examined, the first, That none have power to dispense seales but such as are called to the Ministry, is freely granted. The second, That no man can be so called, till there bee a Church to call him, needeth explication. For by the Church you must understand the community of the faithfull, as they are one body without officers, and such a Church there cannot be, without a ministry to call, and admit them into Church fellowship.*

Answ. This consideration shines with such clearenesse, that an impartiall eye may easily see that the truth by sundry *diverticula* is rather clouded, then the argument fairely answered. This second proposition being too plaine to bee denied, interpretations are sought, but they are rather objections, to which wee shall answer in order. First, though wee grant the Lord ordinarily gathered Churches by the ministry of men in Office, as the Apostles, Evangelists, &c. yet not alwayes so, as is evident, *Acts* 11. 20, 21. The story of *Waldus* is well knowne, and we suppose you will grant those *Waldenses* the name of a true Church. *Origen* when hee was not allowed of the Church to bee a Minister, yet converted many who died Martyrs. The story also of *Frumentius* is well known, with divers others. Secondly, Ministers by Office are of two sorts, either such as are called immediatly or mediatly, such as were immediatly and extraordinarily called, were before Churches, and were called together and begin Churches, (as the Apostles, *Matth.* 28. 20. *Act.* 1. 8.) But all ordinary officers that are to administer in a Church doe necessarily presuppose a Church to call them, unlesse any will adventure to say in plaine *English*, that the calling of a Minister may bee without the antecedent election of the people, and then wee shall finde what to Reply.

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The Apostles baptized not themselves, but by the helpe of others, and those not called of the people to baptize, 1 Cor. 1. 17. *Reply.*

Bee it so that in *Corinth Paul* baptized not many but by others, yet first we demand, By whom did *Paul* and the Apostles baptize? It was either by Evangelists, and so it is all one, as if the Apostles, as extraordinary officers did it, or by the Pastors newly chosen and ordained in the Churches newly gathered, who might baptize the rest; and then the Church was before such officers: or else by private persons, which is denyed expressly in the Reply to the first proposition. *Answ.*

The Apostles appointed by election Elders in every City or Church, and so there was a Church before Elders, but this Church was a society of beleevers by Baptisme admitted into Church fellowship, and therefore there must be Ministers to baptize, before there can bee a Church to call a Minister. For a company of unbaptized men cannot choose a Minister to baptize them. *Reply.*

Wee see here still how unawares the truth of this proposition and of the position it selfe breaketh forth; for the proposition it is fully yeelded and is most plain in the place alluded to Acts 14. Vers. 23. And the position is yeelded also, for if the Apostles admitted beleevers into all those Churches in the first constitution of them by baptisme, (which is the very truth wee contend for, and was formerly denyed) and these Churches were such as chose Elders (and therefore were particular Churches) and so the cause is fully yeelded. *Answ.*

A company of converts unbaptized ought to desire baptisme, but they have no power to elect one amongst themselves to dispense the seales unto the rest, &c. It can never bee shewed in Scripture that any society of unbaptized did first choose from among themselves a Pastour or Teacher by whom they might bee baptized, you cannot produce one example or other proofe in Scripture of one man teaching the Gospel ministerially, but hee was baptized and a member of a true Church or of a society, who made choyce of a Pastor or Teacher, but they were baptized persons. *Reply.*

1 If all this were granted that when Churches were gathered by Apostles and extraordinary officers out of persons unbaptized, they were first baptized into Church fellowship, before they chose Officers, and so long as the Apostles remained, enjoyed from them other ordinances, as *Act.* 2. and so had no Officers chosen by themselves, but by Christ immediatly for them, yet as when the Apostles left them, they must choose Officers if they *Answ.*

will enjoy ordinances: So when there is no such Apostles nor Evangelists, nor no need of baptisme, (as is usually the cause of Christians arising out of popery) in this case wee say such Churches can partake of no ordinances without they choose officers, and yet this varyeth not from the Scripture patterne neither. But onely so farre as the state of those beleevers differ, when *Paul* found about twelve beleevers at *Ephesus*, who were baptized by *John* the Baptist, *Act.* 19. 1.&c. If these were by the Apostle set into a constituted Church, as is probable, (being called on further to the knowledge of Christ and his will and wayes) there was no need of baptizing them againe with water, but onely with the holy Ghost, as the Apostles were at Pentecost, *Act.* 1. 5. with 2. 1. 2. and yet no varying from the rule in so doing: and the like is our case now.

2 If this bee so as here you urge, then those former assertions must needs fall to the ground; as, *That every society in covenant with God is the true Church of God, page* 23. *and that it is simply necessary to the being of a Church, that it bee layd upon Christ the foundation, which being done, the remaining of what is forbidden, or want of what is commanded, cannot put the society from the right and title of a Church.* If these were so a company of unbaptized persons may bee a Church, being in Covenant with God and layd on Christ the foundation, though they want baptisme.

3 Though no such example of unbaptized persons choosing a Pastour among themselves can bee shewed, when there was no need thereof; (Apostles being at hand to baptize them) yet why in absence of Apostles, &c. might they not choose some other baptized Christian, who comming into some farre remote country of Infidels, is a meanes of their conversion; wee see nothing to hinder: it would bee hard for any to shew an example of Presbyters holding a Synod or ordaining of Elders, without Apostles or some extraordinary officer, yet we suppose, you make no doubt of such things.

4 If an example of one unbaptized that preached & baptized Ministerially would satisfie, the example of *John* the Baptist might answer your demand, for whether hee baptized himselfe, or were baptized by some other at first, an unbaptized person did baptize, but wee see no need of such an example: Scripture grounds are sufficient to guide us in these cases, bee they rules, examples or good consequences deduced from them, and wee reason thus; a

Church

Church of beleevers professing Christ have liberty from Christ to chooſe their Officers: But a company of unbaptized men professing the entire faith in a combined ſociety, is a true Church: and therefore may chooſe their officers.

The third propoſition: That the power of calling Miniſters is given by Christ unto the Church, muſt alſo rightly be underſtood, by the Church muſt not be underſtood the faithfull alone, but their guids and Officers with them, who are to goe before them and to governe and direct them in their choyce, neither can wee ſay two or three beleevers linked in a ſociety is ſuch a Church, to whom the call of Miniſters do belong, but that right was given by Chriſt to ſuch Churches, as were gathered by the Apoſtles. Reply.

The firſt Limitation of this propoſition wee paſſe over as being ſpoken to in the former; to this wee anſwer, that when a Church have guides, wee grant they are to governe them therein, but not to limit them, whom to chooſe, but when the Church have no ſuch guides, (as by death and other wayes it may fall out,) ſhall they then loſe their right of chooſing? if ſo, let it be ſhewed to whom the right falls; They may take what counſell and helpe from others they want, but the choyce is onely in them, and therefore this limitation is needleſſe. For the number of two or three wee contend not, but ſuch Churches as the Apoſtles gathered were particular Congregations, and therefore the right is in ſuch, bee they more or fewer. When *Bellarmine* ſaith, that our Miniſters intruded themſelves into Churches; no, ſaith Dr. *Field*, for the people elected them, which they might lawfully doe and ſeparate from wicked Miniſters, which hee proves by the teſtimony of *Cyprian*, writing to the Biſhops of *Spaine* not to communicate with *Baſilides* and *Martialis*, who fell to Idolatry in times of perſecution, *Quando ipſa plebs poteſtatem habet, &c.* Alſo from *Ocham*, who ſaith, *Si Papa & maxime celebres Epiſcopi incidunt in hæreſin, ad Catholicos devoluta eſt poteſtas omnis judicandi:* to which hee addes this reaſon, either they muſt ſeparate from them, and chooſe others, or conſent to their impieties. *Field lib.* 3. *cap.* 39. What followeth in this place being little to this point; and for the moſt part not ſcrupled by us: and what is not acknowledged by us, wee ſhall have a fitter occaſion to ſpeake to it, therefore here wee paſſe it over. Anſw.

Propoſit. 4. *That all thoſe who deſire ſeales are bound to joyne themſelves in Church fellowſhip, that ſo they may call a Miniſter to diſpenſe the ſeales unto them, will not follow from the former rightly underſtood: for* Reply.

they

they must partake of the seales before they can joyne themselves together in Church estate.

Answ. To this objection was spoken before, onely we marvell why you say they must first partake of Seales, when as *Acts* 2. they were baptized and added to the Church the same day: and 'tis granted the Apostles gathered Churches by baptisme.

Reply. *Such as for lack of meanes and opportunity cannot joyne in such estate, or bee dispersed by persecution or destitute of Pastors or Teachers, may for a time seeke the seales in other societies.*

Answ. The first instance is the thing in question; and such as may come to any society to desire seales are not wholly destitute of meanes and opportunity to joyne, viz. to that society. The two other instances being of such as may bee supposed still to hold their right in a Church society; the thing is granted by us in way of communion of Churches.

Reply. *The people also who are deprived of right and libertie to chuse their pastour, may desire the seales of him that is set over them.*

Answ. This objection is easie, for in desiring seales of him and submitting themselves to his ministry, they doe now choose him; however at first they opposed his comming. But what is this to what ought to bee in an orderly way whereof wee speake?

Reply. *These propositions being allowed for currant; a nation or people plunged into Idolatry or Infidelity, or otherwise dischurched cannot by ordinary meanes recover into a Church estate, wherein they may lawfully and according to Gods appointment desire or expect that the seales of the Covenant shall bee dispensed unto them.*

Answ. What should hinder, if the whole nation would bee willing, to recover themselves into Churches? Indeed that is rare to be found that all will affect such a recovery. But wee see nothing to hinder but all the nation or so many as are awakened in conscience to bewaile their Apostasie and lament after the Lord, having especially the countenance of the supreme magistrate, severall companies of Christians may combine in Churches so as may best suite with their edification, chuse officers and injoy ordinances. Nay, *e contra*, our Protestant Divines, as *Chemnitius, Field, Brentius, Whitacher, Luther, &c.* make peoples power of electing their Ministers the best foundation of a peoples recovery of a true Ministry and Church estate.

Reply. *The fifth Proposition riseth beyond measure, That no Christian can expect by the appointment of God to partake in the seales, till hee have joyned himselfe*

himselfe in Church fellowship and in the call of the Minister. We conceive you will not say that children and women have to doe in the call of the Minister. If some part of the Church doe not consent in the call of the Minister, must they separate from the ordinances of worship, &c.

The seeming liwellings of this proposition will easily fall and run within bankes and bounds, if it bee received in its true sense and meaning; for by the call of a Minister must needs bee understood the voluntary subjection of all Church members to his ministery after hee is called, as well as the act of election of him at the first: It were irrationall to thinke a Minister is to bee chosen over againe, whensoever a member is added to the Church. And therefore our meaning was not hard to conceive, and being so taken, women choose their Minister, that is, voluntarily submit to him being chosen: Children are subjected to him by their parents: the dissenting part of the Church ought to submit to him being chosen, and doe if they remaine under his Ministry; and so in all other cases you have or can suppose. *Answ.*

Here you say people must joyne in the call of a Minister before they can lawfully desire and bee admitted to the seales. And another hath zealously affirmed, It is a presumptuous sinne to choose an Officer not trayned up and tryed in debating, discussing, carrying and contriving Church affaires, in admonishing, exhorting, comforting, &c. Lay these together and consider how long many a pious soule converted to the faith must bee compelled to want Gods ordinances. *Reply.*

First, it doth not answer the profession in the latter thus to joyne us with Mr. *Robinson* as another of the same sort as it were. For such as would gladly receive every Syllable from us that may dislodge their thoughts of separation in us (as wee are heartily desired to bee allured of in the Epistle to this Reply) wee thinke would not so closely joyne us with such they would have us parted from; and upon so little occasion and to so little purpose, unlesse they doe much forget themselves. *Answ.*

Secondly, when it cannot be denied but the choyse of Ministers is in the Church, and that hands should not rashly bee laid on any man: and Deacons the lowest Office should bee proved and then Minister being found blamelesse; yea hee saith and these also proved, implying that others also should bee so, 1 *Tim.* 3. 10. what fault can be found with the substance of what either *Robinson* or our selves speake, if our meaning, and his were but charitably taken? If his word bee over-zealous to say it is a presumptuous

teous sin to doe otherwise, what is that to us?

Thirdly, For the delay of ordinances, if both these be taken together: in most cases it need not be long, where God affordeth able and fit men for office. But if some delay be, and that a church want some ordinances, and cannot by Communion with other Churches injoy them, (which is rare,) yet is it not better to forbeare some ordinances a while, then miscarry in so great a worke as the choise of officers, upon which the following comfort and good of the Church doth so much depend? The demand following is answered in this whole discourse, and wee hope not with words but proofes; especially in our answer to the Reply in the first consideration: neither doe wee see any such difficulty, but that such Christians may as easily joyne to such a Church for a time, as desire to injoy the ordinances, and to sit loose from it: for transient members we disallow not.

Reply. *If the propositions may stand for good, I feare we shall scarce finde that ever in ordinary way the Sacraments were lawfully dispensed or received in the Christian Churches of God since the first foundation of them.*

Answ. If they bee taken in their true meaning, and in that latitude we intend them, wee see no such cause of scruple. For what is more ordinary in all true Churches, then for people, first to chuse their Ministers, & then to receive the seals at their hands? and this hath beene the way of Ancient reformers. It is true, many corruptions have beene in many true Churches, and usurpations upon the right of the people in choosing their Ministers, as also in administrations of the Ordinances themselves, and oft in the Constitution of Churches. But as the maintaining of any truth of God against those corruptions in worship, &c. doth not argue an unlawfulnesse of the ordinances in such Churches, but convinceth onely the corrupt administration of them: So in this case to assert the right way of Churches electing officers, and injoying Ordinances against all corruptions that have beene in the Churches, doth not make a nullity of the Ordinances themselves. We may say that this conclusion riseth beyond measure. The objections being thus answered, we leave the conclusion to the judgement of the indifferent Reader.

CHAP. XII.

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To the seventh consideration, The practise of the Church of Strangers in London, *recorded by* John Alasco, *is far differing from your judgment and practise in the point in question. For first, say they,* Paul *testifieth that the Church it self, without exception of any member of it, is cleane & holy by the administration of baptisme.* Reply.

We confesse the same. Answ.

Secondly, *They hold Communion with the Church of* England *as one with theirs.* Reply.

The Church of *England* they call it not, but the English Churches: and we deny not the same in an orderly way: as they also required Testimony of their piety, if any did but present a child to baptisme in their Church. Wee have often professed this, and by your owne grant most of the approved Christians amongst us are not members of the English Churches, having renounced their right of membership and Communion with the Church they were of there. Answ.

Thirdly, *This order was observed by them to prevent the impostures of some that pretended to the English they were joyned to the Strangers*; & contra. Reply.

This was not the onely reason of their order; for his words are, All strangers doe not joyne themselves to our Church; yea there are those that *avoiding all Churches, &c.* which plainely sheweth they looked further then such according to our practise: even their owne country men fled for religion, as we are: they yet received them not till by publike profession of faith and subjection to discipline, they joyned themselves to some Congregationall Church. Answ.

Secondly, this sheweth what disorder and abuse of ordinances will follow from such a liberty to admit such as are not joyned to some Church: for by this meanes many will neglect all order and discipline, if they may but have the seales.

Thirdly, to put all out of question that their practise and judgement in effect was the same with ours in this point, note the first question propounded by them, Are these Infants which you offer the seed of this, Church that they may lawfully be here baptized by our Ministery?

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CHAP. XIII.

THus farre wee have answered to the Reply made to the considerations in our answer to the 3. and 4. positions. Now whereas wee tooke notice of three objections against our first consideration, and answered the same: It pleaseth the learned authour to take up onely two of them, and with much inlargement to urge the same as his reasons against the positions, and to apply our answers thereunto; by which meanes our answers to the objections briefly set downe may seeme not so apt and full here as they would appeare in their proper places: and therefore it will bee needfull for us to inlarge our selves somewhat in answering some passages at least in the reasons as they are here propounded, before wecome to the Reply.

Reply. Reason, 1. *That sacred order God hath set in his visible Church, &c.*

Answ. These words with all that follow, whatever they may seeme to carry with them, are nothing but a bare denyall of the positions in variety of expressions.

Reply. *For first, The baptisme of* John *was true baptisme, &c. but hee never demanded of those hee received, whether they were entered into Church Covenant, &c.*

Answ. This wee had in substance before, and is answered (with all the other instances in this first reason) in our answer to the Reply to the first consideration, and in other places; and therefore in vaine here to repeat the same. And wee have observed more then once your plaine confession that the Apostles constituted Churches by baptisme, even such Churches as they set Elders in by the election of the people.

Reply. *The second reason in substance is this, because from Christ and the constant practise of the Apostles we learne, that such as are called of God, received the holy Ghost, beleeve in the Lord, professe their faith in him with repentance and amendment of life, have a right to baptisme, and desiring it are wronged if they bee deprived thereof.*

Answ. We grant the whole; but as it is supposed in due order they must receive it; so wee desire no more, for wee grant upon these common grounds, such have *jus ad rem*, but not *jus in re*, and the immediate fruition of them.

Reply. Thirdly, *By a lively faith a man hath internal Communion with Christ, by profession of the intire faith joyned with conformity of life in righteousnes, holinesse.*

holinesse and fellowship of love, hee is a member of the visible Congregation or flock of Christ, though no set member of a free Independent society: and baptisme is a seale of our admission into the flocke of Christ; not ever more, but by accident, of our receiving into a particular Congregation.

This reason stands upon such a sense of the Catholik Church as cannot be found: and it was before confessed that the Catholick Church consisteth of all true particular Churches, as the parts of it. And therefore how can a man be visibly a member of the whole, and belong to no part thereof? *Answ.*

Secondly, We deny not but such have a right to be in the particular Church, and so to baptisme and all ordinances? but as by such profession they are not members of any particular Church, so neither have they immediate right to the priviledges thereof without admittance into the same. Fit matter, such are for a particular visible Church that professe the intire faith, &c. But it doth not admit them actually thereunto: and your owne expression secretly implyeth as much, when you say baptisme is a seale of our admission into the Church or flocke of Christ; If baptisme bee the seale of our admission, then there is an admission thereunto before baptisme: but who doth admit, and where, and when is any admitted to the Church, but in particular Congregations? Can any bee admitted into a Church, that whole Church being ignorant thereof? but a man may professe the intire faith, and live accordingly amongst the Heathen, where neither any Church nor member of it take knowledge thereof; and therefore bare profession doth not admit men, but make them fit to bee received and admitted into the visible Church.

Your fourth Reason wee have had twice before, and answered the same.

To our answer of the first objection; from the Instances of the Centurion, Lydia, *the Jailour, and the Eunuch.* *Reply.*

First, If where the holy Ghost is given and received, and faith professed according to Gods Ordinance, there none may hinder from being baptized (scil. by such as have power to baptize them,) then either such are members of the Church, or baptisme is not a priviledge of the Church; then it is not essentiall to baptisme in the first institution that it should bee dispensed to none but members of a Congregationall assembly.

It is freely granted, First, That baptisme is a priviledge of the *Answ.*

Church. Secondly, that such as professe the faith, and have received the Holy Ghost, are members of the Church, (if by Church bee meant the Church mysticall considered as visible, though not alwayes politicall) Thirdly, that these may receive baptisme by such as have power to baptize them; but immediately to baptize them, none had power but by an extraordinary call of God so to doe, as hath bin formerly shewed. But it will not hence follow, that ordinary officers have such a power, (wanting such extraordinary call) because the members of the Church Catholicke having right unto the seales; yet the immediate fruition of them, they must have by ordinary officers in a politicall body, the onely subject according to order of all such institutions: otherwise we must admit private baptismes, if the extraordinary examples of the Apostles be pressed for our patterne.

Reply. *Then the Apostles in dispensing seales walked by rules of Scripture and grounds common to us, and then the difficulty remaining is onely this: Whether a Pastour may dispense seales to such as have right to them and do orderly desire them, though hee be not yet a set member of a Congregation.*

Answ. Wee grant the Apostles ordinarily and generally baptized upon common grounds, but still when they did so they received them into some particular Church; and so baptized them: and in the like orderly way any pastour may doe the same. Secondly, we answer, things may bee done (*sano sensu*) upon common and morall grounds, and yet may not be done by others upon the same grounds. To give one instance in stead of many: the Apostles preached the Gospel to gather in the elect of God and to edifie the Church &c. and Ministers upon the same common grounds must now preach the Gospel also: yet in that the Apostles on those grounds preached to all Nations, this doth not warrant Ministers now to do the like: so here though we baptize beleevers as they did, yet wee may not do it to all in all cases as they did. And therefore the rule holds onely when all circumstances are alike as well as the Common grounds.

Reply. Secondly, *In the instance given, it is not probable that baptisme was evermore administred by the Apostles or Evangelists. For before the death of Christ the Disciples baptized, when they were neither Apostles nor Evangelists properly. After the death of Christ, &c. If* Philip, Ananias, *and others might baptize such as were no members of particular Congregations, then may ordinary Pastours doe the like.*

Answ. You mistake here in the force of our answer, as hath beene shewed

shewed in the first consideration, to which this objection and answer belong. For wee doe not make all the Acts of the Apostles and Evangelists extraordinary, but generally orderly in the way wee professe. Secondly, wee answer to the particulars, (not to wrastle with the Ghosts of humane imaginations and conjectures, whether any besides the Apostles baptized the 3000. *Act.* 2.) As for *Philip* and *Ananias* if they baptized, did they baptize as private men, or as Church Officers? If the second, what Officers were they? ordinary or extraordinary? Wee thinke it will not bee thought they were ordinary who were honoured with such extraordinary worke: But in what Office soever they were, those particular actions (in baptizing the Eunuch and *Paul*) were done by an immediate call of God, as is evident in the story.

Thirdly, *It is very improbable that the persons baptized were in Church State, or Order. If they were members of the Jewish Church not yet dissolved, this is not to the purpose, for men have not right to baptisme, because members of the Jewish Church, but because Disciples, and as you say, joyned together in Covenant, &c.* *Reply.*

Wee grant, that since the visible kingdome of Christ was set up in visible Christian Churches, the seales belong properly and ordinarily to the members of Christian Churches not Jewish: yet wee may affirme that if in any speciall case a beleever was baptized by any that had a speciall call thereto, where there was no Christian Church present actually to joyne unto: yet being a member of the Jewish Church not yet dissolved, the case does not so much vary from the set Order of Christ in those times, and that is all wee intend. *Answ.*

If the Eunuch, and Centurion were proselytes, and of the Jewish Church, the Samaritans whom Philip baptized were not so, and that any Gentiles, or the Jaylour were set members of a Christian assembly, is very strange, &c. *Reply.*

This is fully answered before in the first consideration; and that which is according to the rule and mind of Christ, and the first, and common practise of the Apostles, *Act.* 2. to joyne men to the Church when they baptized them, need not seeme strange. *Answ.*

In the Apostles practise two things are to bee considered. First, the circumstance of the action. Secondly, the substance or quality of the Act. In some circumstances the baptizing of some of these might bee extraordinary, but the substance, and quality of the action was grounded upon *Reply.*

rules perpetuall, and common to us and them. That is done in an extraordinary way, &c.

Answ. 1 Wee suppose amongst such Circumstances you will reckon that for *one*, that the Eunuch was baptized alone in the Wildernesse, not in any visible assembly of Saints. Wherein ordinary Pastors may not imitate that Act: and this comes not farre short of what wee say: for the chiefe proof that they were not received into a particular Church, lies in their absence from such an assembly: and if they might bee admitted to the Catholick Church without the presence of any Christian (but him that baptized them) why not into a particular Church as well? 2 The large discourse about the Apostles extraordinary power, and doing things upon common grounds: is so oft said for substance, and answered before, that it were vaine to trouble the Reader againe with the same thing.

Reply. *Secondly, an argument followes necessarily from a particular example to a generall, when the proofe of one particular to another is made by force of the similitude common to the whole kind under which those particulars are contained. Now in this matter wee speake of; no reason can be named why wee should thinke it lawfull for the Apostles to baptize such as were no set members, and the same should be unlawfull in all cases for Pastors of particular Congregations.*

Answ. Wee deny that the Apostles did so ordinarily, and therefore your Argument doth not hold; if it bee built upon the common practise; but if it be built upon some few speciall cases: we retort the Argument thus: That which the Apostles did ordinarily upon common grounds, that Pastors ought to doe: but ordinarily they baptized Disciples, admitting them first into particular Churches; therefore in the third reason wee grant the conclusion of it, that the Apostles did walke by ordinary rules generally.

Reply. *Fourthly, the practise of the Apostles in receiving the faithfull, &c. is backed on divine precept, &c.*

Answ. If you meane they baptized such without receiving them into some particular Church, wee deny this assumption upon the grounds laid downe before.

Reply. *Fifthly, In the first consideration you prove the seales to be the priviledge of the Church in ordinary dispensation by this passage of Scripture, Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: but if the Apostles baptized by extraordinary dispensation in your sense this testimony is insufficient for that purpose.*

Although

Although the printed Copy of our answer omit this proofe wholly, and also, *Rom.*9.4. yet in our true Copy wee alledged, *Acts* 2 41,42.47. wherein you will finde not onely this passage, Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: but withall that they were added to the Church, and such a Church as continued stedfastly in the fellowship,&c. of the Apostles. *Answ.*

Likewise *Verse* 47. that the conversion, and baptizing of Disciples being omitted, the joyning or adding to the Church is put in the stead thereof, which proofes as they are omitted wholly in the printed Copy, so also you make no reply unto them.

Secondly, by these proofes it might easily have been seene that wee did not looke upon all the Apostles acts in this case of Baptisme as extraordinary, but that their first and leading examples were ordinary, and in that order wee plead for: which if it had been regarded, much labour had been saved in this dispute, which hath been spent to little purpose. And,

Our second Reason.

In due order the seales belong to them to whom the grant is given, but the grant is vouchsafed to the faithfull, and their seed, forgivenesse of sinnes, &c. and the benefits of the Covenant are so linked together, that where one is granted none is denyed, &c. *Reply.*

'Tis true, the Seales belong to all them by a remote right to whom the grant is given, (as hath been ofte said) but not immediate: yet in the very propounding of this reason wee may observe two things that doe cut the sinewes of it. 1. The limitation of due order, which as hath been said can no where be found but in a particular Church. Let any shew what order Christ hath put his Catholick visible Church into, or where that order is to bee seene but in particular Churches, by which order every one is bound to joyne to such Churches, as well as to partake in the outward Ordinances of Gods worship, which are there onely to be found. Secondly, it is granted that not onely forgivenesse of sins, but all other benefits of the Covenant of grace are linked together, and are the grant sealed up in the Sacrament; and if so, is not visible conjunction with Christ and his Church, with all the priviledges of the Church, and ordinances of the same, part of that grant by the Covenant of grace, or of the Gospell? wee suppose none would deny it, why then should not visible beleevers require, and take up this part of the grant, as well as the seale of it? for *sigillum sequitur donum*; let them take this gift and the seal- *Answ.*

is

is ready for them. And this may answer the first part of the Reply about *Rom.* 4.11. as also all the rest which followes being things so oft repeated, and answered before, as make it tedious to all.

CHAP. XIIII.

Position 5.

THat the power of excommunication is so in the body of the Church, that what the major part shall allow must bee done, though the Pastors and Governors, and the rest of the assembly be of another mind, and that peradventure upon more substantiall reasons.

Reply. *This question is much mistaken, for the demand is not, Whether in the Congregation matters should be carried by number of votes against God, as you interpret the position, but whether the power of excommunication so lie in the body of the Congregation, as that sentence must proceed in* externo foro, *according to the vote and determination of the major part, and so in admissions of members, &c. and though they have no power against God, but for God, yet in execution of that power they may bee divided in judgement, and one part must erre. Now hence the question is moved, Whether the power bee so in the people, that what the major part determine must stand.*

Answ. If our whole answer had been attended unto, it is so cleare and full, that it could not with any shew of reason bee subject to such a mistake: To omit the first part of our answer affirmatively, wherein wee cite Mr. *Parker* as consenting with him. In the second part to the position as stated, our answer is plainely negative, that excommunication is not so seated, neither ought to bee so in any of the Churches of the Lord Jesus. What followes is our reason grounded upon the last clause of the position, because Churches ought to carry things not by number of votes against God (as this position implies) but by strength of Rule and Reason according to God, and for edification, 2 *Cor.* 13.8. 2 *Cor.* 10. 8. Now let any judge whether the position doth not imply such an absurdity so oft as things should bee carried by the major vote against the Officers, and the rest having better Reasons, and therefore wee are apt to think that if the learned author had been so ready to embrace any syllable that lends to dislodge these thoughts

thoughts of us as leaning to separation, hee would have beleeved our plaine negation of this position, which indeed is according to our constant practise never following the major part of votes against the Officers, but counting it the duty of the Officers in such cases either to satisfie the consciences of the major part (or lesser) by the rule of the word, or to yeeld not to the vote but reasons if they bee stranger; or to suspend the businesse, and referre to the counsell of other Churches, if they cannot agree but a division arise according to the patterne, *Act.* 15.

Reply. *Amongst them that hold the power of the Keyes to bee given to the Church, some (as* Fenner, Parker, I. D.) *distinguish between the power it selfe which they give to the Church, and the execution which they confine to the Presbytery, others give the power of the Keyes with the exercise thereof to the whole body of the Church; or if in the dispensation they attribute any thing to the Officers, it is but as servants of the Church from whom they derive their authority, and here lies the stone at which the Separation stumble, and which wee conceive to bee your judgement and practise, wherein wee required your plaine answer, but have received no satisfaction. You referre us to Mr.* Parkers *Reasons to prove the power of the Keyes belong to the whole Church, who are of farre differing judgement from him in the point it selfe, and if your judgement and practise bee as the Separation (as wee feare) you dissent from him and wee from you in these considerations.*

Answ: Wee are sorry to see this Reverend man of God so strongly possessed with a prejudicate opinion and feare of our concurrence with the Separation: (upon what grounds it is not said, nor can wee apprehend) That neither our flat negation of the position, nor our reference to Mr. *Parker* as concurring with him, should give him any satisfaction to the contrary. But if that bee the judgement, and practise of the Separation which is here imputed unto them, *viz.* That the power and exercise of the Keys is in the body of the Church, and what the Officers doe therein is but as servants of the Church from whom they derive their authority; if our profession may bee of any use to satisfie, wee doe freely, and heartily professe to the contrary: affirming that the authoritative power of transacting all things in the Church, is in the hands of the Officers who minister in the name and power of Christ to and over the Church, and that the power or liberty of the community whereby they may and ought to concurre with their guides, so long as they rule in the Lord, is to bee carried in a way of obedience

dience unto them, and when upon just cause they dissent from them, still they are to walke respectfully towards them, and wee thinke our brethren are not ignorant that Mr. *Parker* and *Fenner* give as much to the Church in excommunication, as wee have pleaded for in any of our publique writings. But seeing wee are led by this learned author from this particular question about excommunication to that beaten controversie of the power of the Keyes in generall, and the first subject thereof, whereby wee are forced to declare our selves herein; wee shall briefly gleane up some few of our scattered apprehensions, as may most concerne the case in hand.

1 There are divers Keyes that are diversly distributed to severall subjects in respect of execution, and therefore the question should have beene first stated: and what Keyes are denied to the people and appropriated to the Officers. And what to some Officers, not to others, should have been shewed before Arguments were presſed.

Pet Mart. de Excom. Loc. Com.
* *Officiall.*

2 The state of the Church being mixed of an Aristocracy to which belongs Office, and Democracy to which belongs priviledge; hence the power of the Keyes is twofold. 1 * Officiall power. 2 Fraternall. The first belonging to the guides of the Church, the other to the fraternity thereof.

3 The officiall power of the Keyes is a power to act with authority in the name of Christ ministerially in opening and shutting, binding and loosing, &c. In respect of which Office (while the Minister acts according to the will of Christ) he is over the Church in things properly Ecclesiasticall, because hee stands in the roome of Christ, and comes in his name, and hence in those Church acts which are not proper to him, but common in some cases to the fraternitie, yet there is an office-authority upon them, which is not upon the like acts materially done by others. *Ex. gr.* Any brother may and ought to exhort and rebuke, 1 *Thes.* 5. 14. *Heb.* 3. 13. *Titus* a Minister is exhorted to doe the same thing, but with all authority, *Titus* 2. 15. some able and gifted, though not in Office, may occasionally open and apply the word, yet not with an Office-authority. But an Officer preacheth as an Ambassadour of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. So also in admission of members, and casting out of offenders (wherein though the fraternity have a power whether in consenting or otherwise) yet they act obedientially in respect of their guides, declaring the rule, going before

before them in example, and commanding them (if need bee) in the name of Christ to doe his pleasure. But the Officers act in these things in the name and authority of him in whose roome they stand, and hence wee thinke that in case the fraternity without Officers should cast out any, yet it is not altogether the same with that which may bee dispensed by the Officers thereof, it being no officiall act.

2 Fraternall power (in publike Church acts) is a joynt power of liberty or priviledge (in some sense, & in some cases) to open, & shut, which power is not in any one or more severally; but in the whole joyntly, for as they have power to combine, and so to receive others into the communion, so by like reason to shut out offenders from their communion; but thus they do fraternally, not officially: and as they have such a power of election of Officers to them, so they have also a fraternall power (due order being attended) to shut them out (when there is just cause) according to the common received rule, *Cujus est instituere, ejusdem est & destituere.*

These things which might bee more fully explained and confirmed, wee have onely briefly set downe both to wash off the blot of popular Government from the wayes of Christ, as if all authority were taken from the Ministers, or nothing left them but to dispense the seales, and in all other things to sit meerely as a moderator in the Churches of Christ, which wee utterly disclaime.

And also to make way for our more cleare answer to what is objected here in the Reply: Wee grant therefore the first argument and the conclusion thereof thus farre, that the officiall power of the Keys was not given to the whole multitude, but onely there is given to them a power to choose Officers, which Officers should execute the same.

2 *If Christ gave this power to the community, was it from the beginning of the Church, or tooke it effect after the Church was planted? Not the first, for then the Apostles themselves should derive their power from the community, which they did not.* *Reply.*

This reason is answered before (so farre as concernes our tenent) in the second consideration, where it is alledged, to which wee referre the Reader; neither doe wee say the officiall power is so given to the community, but such things as are here added, wee shall consider so farre as concernes us. *Answ.*

The Apostles and other Governours were given of Christ to the Church *Reply.*

as for their end, and all their authority was given unto them for the Church, as for the whole: but the authority it selfe was immediatly derived from Christ, and is not in the Church as the immediate subject, nor derived from the Church, but from Christ the King of the Church. The authority of Governour is given of Christ for a gift to the Church, but not a gift absolute. That it may reside in the power of the whole Church, but for a conditionall gift communicated to the Governours for the good of the whole. Parker, pol. lib. 3. cap. 8.

Answ. 1 Concerning the power of the Apostles, and extraordinary Officers wee now dispute not, it was answered before; and for the authority of other Officers, wee doe not affirme that it is derived from the Church, but from Christ for the good of the Church; but if the question bee of the application of an Office, and the power of it to such and such persons in the Church, wee would demand whether Christ doth this to such a Pastour and Teacher immediatly or mediatly: if immediatly, then their call is not (in this) different from Apostles, which *Paul* expresly distinguisheth *Gal.* 1. 1. *Paul* was an Apostle, not of man, nor by man, but of God, and by Jesus Christ; false Teachers are of man, and by man. True Pastors as *Thomas*, *Iohn*, *&c.* are of God by man, and if Christ communicate this Office, and the authority annexed unto it mediatly by man, not immediatly, the question is, Who is the subject of this power to call, and so to apply this office in the name of Christ to this or that person, *John*, *Thomas*, *&c.* Wee hold this fraternall ministeriall power (under Christ) is in the Church, and so farre wee shall defend this position, and where-ever it be else placed it will be subject to all the absurdities that are imputed to us. To the sentence of *Parker* we answer, that the misinterpreting one word of his sentence doth pervert his whole meaning, his words are *Pro dono conditionali ut Rectoribus communicetur*, *i.e.* that the Church might not communicate that power to Officers, nor keepe it in her owne hand. Or that it might bee communicated from Christ by the Church. And this will appeare his meaning, and it agrees with that position hee holds so strongly, that the Church is the first subject of the Keys.

Reply. *After the Churches were established, it tooke not effect, for it is no where found in Scripture that Christ first committed this power to the Apostles, and after to the community; the Ministers and guides were immediately of Jesus Christ from whom immediately they derive their power and authority, by whom they are set over their charge, in whose name they execute*

execute their Office, &c. Yea Pastorship is the gift of Christ as well as Apostleship; and every Pastor is not immediately called, but the office and order of Pastors, the calling, authority and jurisdiction is immediately from Christ, not from the Church.

Answ. First, the power of the Keyes (in a right sense given to the Church) tooke effect from the beginning in Christs institution, and in the frequent practice of the Church, as is shewed before, and therefore this is needlesse to bee proved, that it tooke effect after. Secondly, that Ministers and guides were immediately from Christ, (if you meane ordinary officers) and that every Pastour is not immediately called, seemes to be a contradiction: the places, *Act.* 28. 8. *Ephes.* 4. 8. &c. doe not prove that all Officers are immedately from Christ, though they bee set in the Church by Christ and over the Church by the Holy Ghost, &c. This the Lord can doe, and doth doe by the meanes of his Church walking according to his rule and institution, and therefore you must come at last home to our tenent, (as here you doe) that Pastorship, the office, power, jurisdiction, &c. annexed to it, is immediately from Christ, *viz.* by his institution in the Gospel: but Pastors every one that receive this office, hath it from Christ, but by his Church calling them to the same, and in the name of Christ applying it to them: and thus far we agree with you.

Reply. *The Steward is appointed of the Master of the family alone, and hath all his authority from him. Every Embassador in the cause of his Embassage doth immediately depend upon him from whom he is sent: but if the function, order and authority of Pastors and Teachers bee immediately from Christ, then it is not received from the Church as the immediate receptacle.*

Answ. First, though Pastors in respect of the exercise of their function dispense the Word and other Mysteries of Christ as from him immediately, and so are fitly compared to Embassadors and Stewards, yet in the call of the one and other to that work there is a plaine dissimilitude, the one being called Mediately, the other Immediately by their Masters, and therefore in this case it proves nothing.

Answ. What doth this argument conclude? if onely that the function and order is not from the Church as the first subject, we readily grant it; if the application of the office to such a person, (so farre as may bee done by an outward call) it followes not at all, for the function and office may bee from Christ, and the application thereof by the Church.

Reply. *Thus Protestant Divines dispute against Papists, if Bishops receive their power and authority of exercising immediately from Christ by Mandate, Mission and commission from him, then not from the Pope, and so for Presbyters in regard of the Bishop.*

Answ. The reason and ground of that dispute is because the Pope claimes a plenitude of power from *Peter*, whence all must bee derived to all Bishops, &c. bee they never so orderly chosen and ordained in their owne esteeme, and so indeed usurps the Prerogative of Christ the head of the Church. The like usurpation in its degree was in the Bishops over Presbyters: But here the case is farre different, the Church claming no such power, but onely Ministeriall in the outward call of officers according to his direction, and so the application of that office unto the persons, which hath sufficient ground of Scripture from Christ, and therefore we grant the conclusion. *viz.* That they derive not their power from the people, but from Christ: by meanes of the Church Ministerially and instrumentally applying that office to them, whereunto Christ hath annexed that power. Lastly the like argument may be objected against any other subject of this power you can or will suppose, even the Presbytery it selfe.

Rep'y. *It is usually objected that the Church cannot convey what she never had: but the people may elect their Pastor.*

Whereunto the answer is direct and plaine, nothing can give that it had not formally or vertually, unlesse it give it as an instrument ministring to one that hath it, but so it may give what it never had, nor is capable of. A Steward may give all the offices in his Masters house as ministerially executing his Masters pleasure.

Answ. This answer doth not satisfie, for wee cannot put off our old principles of Reason, that every instrument ministring to the principall cause doth *Conferre vim ad effectum*: and so farre, or in what sense it gives any thing to the effect in that sense, and so farre it must needs have vertually or formally the same in itselfe. If a Conduit convey water ministerially from the fountaine to the house, it hath water in such a sense, as it doth concurre to the effect: and so the Church cannot give the Keys to the Officers as an instrument of Christ, but it must be granted shee received them from Christ vertually to give them to the Officer. Secondly, for the instance; if it bee meant of a Steward giving the offices to such persons as his Master hath named thereunto, and he instals them into the same, the case is not alike yet, here hee must have some

power

power and authority so to doe so that he hath these offices vertually in his hand, but if it be his Masters will, he shall choose what persons hee sees fit according to rules given him, (which is the case here) then hee hath this power vertually in his hand.

Thirdly, if Ecclesiasticall and spirituall power be in the multitude and community of the faithfull, the Church doth not onely call, but make Officers out of power and vertue received into her selfe, and then should the Church have a true Lordlike power in regard of her Ministers. Reply.

If there be any such that hold the Church hath so the power of the Keyes in her selfe, as that she may derive from her selfe authority to the Officers, let such looke unto the conclusion; as for Mr. *Robinson*, though wee doe not approve the sentences you cite out of him, yet we doubt whether you doe not goe beyond his sense & meaning: but according to our sense of this position before layd downe, neither this absurdity of Lordship over the Officers, nor any others that are instanced in, under this reason doe at all follow; and they may bee as strongly urged against the Presbyteries, Classes, Synods, Catholick Church, or any subject of the Keyes that can be named: And the objection, viz. *That God will have the Church choose Officers to execute the power committed to her*, is so answered in the same page, as will serve us as well as you, viz. *God will have her elect Officers of his designment (that is, such as the rule directs her to choose) to doe his worke according to that Power which hee hath given them, and by his direction, and then they are Gods servants and not the Churches, and receive that charge and function immediatly from God, and not from the people; wee meane no otherwise then by that outward call instrumentally applying that Office unto them*; and in this sense wee close with you herein: and indeed this power of electing Officers doth not ever include authority over them whom they chuse, but rather willing subjection unto them, and setting them up to rule; as when a woman chooseth a husband, she makes him her husband in a sort, but withall her head and ruler; so when a people choose a Major, &c. Answ. Reply.

Fourthly, if the Power of the Keyes be given first and immediatly to the community of the faithfull, what reason can bee alleadged why in defect of Officers the Church might not rule, feed, bind, loose, preach, and administer Sacraments; or if any faile in Office, why shee might not supply that want by her power, for the power of the Keys doth containe both authority and exercise, power being given that it may bee exercised, as it is vouchsafed: but the Church cannot exercise these acts of rule. Ergo. Answ.

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Answ. The reason is, because the Church hath not received some of the Keyes formally but onely vertually, and (as was said out of *Parker*) not as a gift absolute but conditionall, that it might bee communicated to the Officers. Such power as the body of the Church hath received formally shee may and doth exercise, as a power of choosing Officers, a power of judging in censures, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. and the like, the power of preaching properly so called & dispensing Sacraments, &c. being acts of authority, the Church hath them onely vertually, and therefore must choose Officers, to whom Christ her Lord hath given authority in the Church. A Corporation that by Patent from the King hath many Priviledges, the power is given to the Body incorporated, and so it is the first subject of it, yet many acts cannot be put forth, but by Officers duely chosen: and so here.

Reply. *For these Reasons (not to insist on any more) wee judge the community of the faithfull, not to bee the immediate receptacle of ecclesiasticall authority, and so the Power of excommunication, not to belong unto them.*

Answ. By this conclusion it appeares that how ever the author began professedly against us as Separatists in this point, yet he followes the cause against Mr. *Parker*, with whom hee seemes to be friends. Secondly, the power of excommunication may belong to the Church or community in respect of a fraternall power of judging, though officiall authority bee not formally given to the Church but to the Officers.

Reply. *If consent of Churches bee asked in this point, to omit others, the Churches of Scotland speake fully and expresly for us in the second booke of Discip. Cap.* 1. *The Church as it is taken for them that exercise spirituall functions in the Congregation of them that professe the truth, hath a certaine power granted of God according to which it useth a proper jurisdiction, &c.* Beza de Presb. pag. 60. Helv. Confess. Cap. 18. Belgick, &c.

Answ. If consent of the learned, godly, and zealous reformers were asked, a cloud of witnesses might bee produced that hold the Church the first subject of the Keyes, as *Fulke*, *Whitaker*, *Parker*, *Peter Martyr*, *Musculus* and others, besides many of the ancient Divines and Councells, *Gerson* and the Parisian Divines well known to the learned concerning quotation of the Scottish discipline, the first words lay so weake a foundation as leave the building ready to fall, in these words. *The Church as it is taken for them that exercise*

spirituall

spirituall functions hath a certaine power, &c. but where is the Church so taken? not in all the New Testament that can be proved with any solid Reason, notwithstanding all wrastling of men to find it out; but generally for the company of the faithfull, either the universall or particular Church; and this sometime considered with her Officers: and divers times as distinguished from them, as *Acts* 14.23. and 20.13.28. *Jam.* 5.14. *Revel.* 2.1.8.12. &c. but never *contra*, for the Officers distinguished from the Church or body of the Congregation; and therefore if the Keyes be given to the Church, and the plea of the power of the Keyes to be given immediatly to the Officers be in and under the name of the Church, it will fall to the Church of the faithfull, if the Scripture may judge: indeed among the Papists, and so the Prelates, the Clergy have long got and held possession of the name of the Church, but the testament of Christ will not beare this foundation, but wee will not trouble the Reader farther about humane testimonies.

CHAP. XV.

Position 6.

THat none are to bee admitted Members but they must promise not to depart or remove unlesse the Congregation will give leave.

Reply. *It is one thing abruptly to breake away when and whither they please, and forsake fellowship another thing, not to depart or remove habitation unlesse the Congregation will give leave; also it is one thing mutually to compound and agree, not to depart from each other without consent and approbation, and other to require a promise of all that be admitted into societie that they shall not depart without the Churches allowance, if such a promise be required of all members to bee admitted, wee cannot discerne upon what grounds your practise is warranted.*

Answ. Wee are still inforced to cleare our answer from mistakes, for it seemes the answer left it doubtfull, whether wee doe not hold the position affirmatively, and in practise require such a promise as a part of our Church Covenant of all that are admitted, and therefore to cleare the case more fully wee shall first minde the Reader with the true meaning of the answer, and then adde what is needfull to take away the scruples; and first the answer saith, *that wee judge it expedient and most according to rule, that brethren*

should not forsake fellowship, &c. but in removalls approve themselves, &c. Now this is farre short of what the position affirmes; for first, that none are to bee admitted without such a promise, includes a necessity; the answer speakes onely of expediency and agreeableneſſe to rule, not to breake off abruptly. Secondly, the Position affirmes the necessitie of a promise; the answer speakes onely of the case in practise, as in many cases besides, for the watch of the Church reacheth to such particular acts of which wee make no promise expresse in the entrance. Thirdly, the Position speakes of the Churches leave, the answer acknowledgeth onely that brethren removing should approve themselves to doe that which is lawfull, and take counsell in such weighty affaires. By all which it appeares that wee doe not owne this position, in judgement nor practise, and therefore in effect our answer doth deny the same, and is negative. Secondly, if the words of the answer bee not full enough: (because wee see our brethren here runne upon it as a question *if such a promise be required*, and Mr. *Rutherford* and others take it up as a confessed practise) wee doe therefore clearely and plainely deny the position and affirme that wee doe not thinke that none are to bee admitted without such a promise; neither is there any such practise in our admissions of members to require such a promise; wee onely count such removalls (especially of families) an action amongst many others whereunto the watch of the Church doth extend, to prevent sinne where there is any just ground of suspition thereof, and to further the best good of such as are under our charge by counsell, prayers, &c. If any Minister and people of old acquaintance and deare affection, or any other Christians cleaving together in love have privatly resolved or agreed together, not to part from each others in any Church, it is the most that wee have taken knowledge of, and wee thinke that hath beene very rare, but for any such publick promise, Covenant, or Church oath, (as some straining things to the height have called it) it is not, nor hath been required or practised amongst us: this being so, there needs no grounds of that which wee practise not.

Reply. *First, you exclude all such as bee not set members from the seales, and yet hinder them from entrance into the Church society, because they cannot promise continuance in the place they are resident in for the present; here we desire to bee satisfied by the word of God by what you require it, &c.*

Answ. First, We deny not but divers may and doe forbeare to joyne because of their unsettledneſſe in the place of their present abode.

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Secondly, It may bee in ſome caſes, ſome may be adviſed by the counſell of their private friends in a Church to forbeare till they be ſome way ſetled. But that any are debarred from Communion when they deſire it, becauſe they cannot promiſe continuance, (unleſſe other juſt cauſes hinder) it neither ſuites with our judgement nor practiſe; and if any ſhould practiſe other wayes, wee doe not allow of the ſame, and therefore it's needleſſe to give you reaſons of what we practiſe not.

Secondly, *It pertaines not to the whole Congregation to take notice or bee acquainted with or judge of every particular members removall: may not a ſervant remove from his Maſter to another Congregation, or a father beſtow his childe in marriage to one of another Congregation, but the whole Church muſt be called to counſell in the matters, &c. when Churches grow populous they muſt bee negligent or weary of ſuch a taske, and for the preſent to challenge ſo much authority over one another is uſurpation, &c.* *Reply.*

If our anſwer were but attended, ſuch apprehenſions of our practiſe of calling the whole Church to counſell in every ſuch caſe, and all that followes might be ſpared. For thus we ſay, *Wee judge it expedient, &c. That none forſake fellowſhip and abruptly breake off, &c.* This doth not imply a neceſſity of calling the whole Church to counſell in every plaine and eaſie caſe; many times; and for the moſt part ſuch removals are ſo plaine and free from ſuſpition of abrupt breaking off or forſaking fellowſhip, that there is no need of counſell, as in caſe of ſervants marriages, &c. and therefore no trouble to the Church: and in ſome removall of families alſo, the caſe is cleare, and openly carried in the knowledge of many of the Church, none ſcruple it, and therefore at the firſt demand of diſmiſſion or letters of recommendations, the ſame are granted: but in removall of ſome members, and in the manner of the ſame, there are ſuch difficulties and dangers as neede the prayers and counſell of the Officers and whole Church, (as is confeſſed after) nor doe wee ſay, it pertaines to the whole Church to bee called to counſell and judge of every particular members removall, for they may approve themſelves to the conſciences of all mediately by adviſing with ſome who may ſatisfie the reſt, if need be. *Anſw.*

Let it be ſhewed, that ever by divine right, this power was committed to the Church, and we will confeſſe it expedient, but till then, wee thinke the Church over rigid, and the members buſiebodies, &c. *Reply.*

Answ. The rule of love whereby wee are bound to exhort, admonish, seeke the edification and good one of another, and that not onely in generall (as of all Christians) but as members of so neere relation in one Church body, who are bound to serve the Lord with one shoulder, *Zeph.* 3.9. and to uphold the worship of Christ therein, as this doth reach to all the actions and wayes of one another, so in a speciall manner to such an action as this is: and we thinke this ground is sufficient to satisfie our practice as wee have declared, which may wipe off the aspersion of being rigid or busie-bodies.

Reply. *In the multitude of counsellors is peace, but over-many counsellors oft causeth distractions, and different apprehensions breed delayes.*

Answ. Wee grant it may doe so, neither doe wee bring all cases to publike counsell, but the case may bee such as needs the publike counsell of all, and as wee have a gracious promise of the presence of Christ in his Churches who is the counsellour: so we confesse to his praise, that we finde the judgment of a Church of Saints in matters orderly carryed, and gathered up from the various gifts of wisedome, grace, and experience of many Christians (when need is) to be a blessed priviledge of Gods people to enjoy, and sanctified oft to the great good of his Saints, and being neglected and slighted hath been oft followed with sad events.

Reply. *The nature of your Church-Covenant inferreth not a necessity of bringing every such businesse to the Church; for you binde your selves mutually to watch one over another, &c. but this essentially tyeth not any man to a perpetuall residence in one place, for then even occasionall absence should be a breach of Covenant, without consent of the Church.*

Answ. We grant, our Church-Covenant neither requires every businesse to come to publike counsell, nor perpetuall residence in one place: neither is it so held by us in judgement or practise.

Reply. *You say you bind your selves to no new duties, but in the word of truth, it is not required neither directly nor by consequence, that no member of a Church should remove or occasionally bee absent from his habitation before hee have acquainted the Church whither he goeth, and on what occasions, &c.*

Answ. It cannot but grieve us to see how the Replyer still not content to take all things in the harshest sense, but will also winde in other matters into his discourse, which may make our practise seeme farre more rigid then it is. First, hee urges us as if wee brought all cases of remove and the occasions thereof, as mar-

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riages, &c. to the counsell of the whole Church. Secondly, hee would by consequence inferre the like of occasionall absence; and now hee weaves in that also, as if it were practised by us to require men to acquaint the Church with the place whither they goe, and the occasions of their occasionall absence, which is farre from us.

And if such businesse must bee determined on the Lords Day, &c. *Reply.*

Wee deny not but the best Churches through weaknesse and temptation may spend too much time in the most necessary administra tions of censures or other affaires: but to possesse the world with such feares upon so little ground may argue the authors charity concerning our wisdome and christian care of the Sabbath was not very great. *Answ.*

As for the Covenant it selfe, &c. but if yee constraine men to meddle with things that belong not to them, and winde them up higher then God, would, and straine every thing to the pitch you seeme here to doe, a godly sober minde may well pause before hee make such a promise. *Reply.*

If the authour had not strained and aggravated things beyond our meaning in the answer, and our practise, this would not have come to so high a pitch to trouble a sober godly mind: we are perswaded that generally sober godly minds, that have their pride and self-willednesse in any good measure mortified, doe count the yoake of Christ (according to our practise of this point) to bee both easie and profitable; neither doe wee require such a promise of any (as was said) but if any stumble at the fourth branch of the first reason from the nature of the Covenant, let us a little here cleare that scruple: when wee reason from the nature of the Covenant, and branch our reason into foure things, it is not to bee so taken, as if every one of those foure things were made a distinct promise in our solemne Covenant, for the fourth is but an inference from the three former, as is easie to observe and indeed it was never made by us a part of the Covenant or a distinct promise of it, either in our judgement or practise. If because we extend our watch to the removals of brethren, it be taken for granted that we require such a promise, it will no more follow, then that we require promises in admissions in a thousand cases to which our watch also extends. *Answ.*

If any shall not meddle with every businesse of this kinde, as questioning *Reply.*

whether it doe belong to him or no, or not aske the advise of the whole societie, as knowing the most bee unfit to counsell in such a case, doth hee breake his Covenant therein, and so commit a sinne in a sort like the sinne of Ananias *and* Saphira? *Iudge your selves if in other cases you would not censure this to bee an high incroachment upon Christian libertie, and a strict binding of mens consciences by humane constitutions.*

Answ. To extend our watch so farre as hath been said unto these cases of removalls from a Church, to prevent sinne in abrupt breaking off and forsaking fellowship, and to prevent the hurt and damage which the sheepe of Christ oft fall into in their unadvised breaking out of the fold the Lord hath placed them in, and to further their best good in their removalls; whatever is thought of it, wee count it no breach of Christian liberty, but a priviledge of the Saints to bee under such a watch, and therefore if any shall neglect any duty that one owes to another, (so farre as it tends necessarily to those ends) wee may well reckon it as a neglect of our Covenant; but because it is offensive to compare this with the sinne of *Ananias*, *&c.* wee intreat our reverend brethren and the Christian Reader to consider, that in the answer, this stands in the third thing noted in the nature of the Covenant, and hath reference to the duties of the Covenant in generall, and is not applyed to this particular case by us, nor well appliable in the manner here expressed. Secondly, it is moderated in the answer which saith (in some sort hee shall commit that sinne.) If these things doe not satisfie, wee wish it expunged, or any other seeming harshnesse, rather then offence be given to any. Lastly, that you may not impute unto us the infringement of Christian liberty herein, wee would acquaint all men with these two things. First, that removals from one towne and Church to another and from full to new Plantations, are frequently practised amongst us, with consent and approbation. Secondly, that wee finde in experience, that as there is in sheepe a wandring disposition, so in this large Wilderneſse, (wherein the Lord hath exercised his people with various temptations, by liberties, by offers of large outward accommodations, by wants and straights, by various opinions vented by Satan and his instruments, &c.) In these respects the Sheepe of Christ are so subject many times to outrunnings, that wee finde more then ordinary need of care and wisedome in this point of our watch in many cases; and many that have broke loose from the counsels of their officers, friends, and

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of the Church, have deepely smarted for it. How sad a case is it when some brainsicke master of a family, transported with a fancy, an odde opinion, will needs carry his whole family with himselfe to the griefe and hazard of his godly wife and hopefull children, &c. from all Ordinances of Christ to a people full of fanaticall errours! were it Christian liberty, or dangerous licenciousnesse to leave such a man to his owne counsels, and not meddle with him?

Reply. *May you not heare from your owne grounds, that herein you have devised an expedient or necessary rite or custome to prevent the dissolution of the body, which never came into the minde of the Lord Jesus the Saviour of his body, and in so doing (if your exposition hold good) you break the second Commandement; and to presse customes onely expedient for the time as standing rules necessary for all times and all persons, to put that authority into the hands of men which God never put upon them; to obliege men to meddle in the affaires of men beyond warrant, to binde consciences under so heavy a penalty as that of* Ananias *and* Saphira, *where God hath not bound them, to debarre approved Christians from the seales, because they cannot promise as stiled members to abide in the society, and yet charge them as men that against light refuse subjection to the Gospel, this is that which wee cannot approve, which yet wee suspect will follow from your judgment, and desire to bee resolved in your practise.*

Answ. Here is a greater heape of heavy criminations gathered together and cast upon us, upon very weake grounds, upon mistakes, suspitions, and (wee feare) too much credulitie given to some clamorous persons, returning to England, and too little credit given to our true relations and faithfull professions: most of these have beene cleared in the former passages where wee met with them, and wee marvell how they come in so twisted together here againe; wee shall here onely cleare our selves of the first, and referre the Reader to their proper places to see our answer to the others.

Here it is imputed unto us that wee have devised a rite to preserve the unity and prevent the dissolutions of the body, which wee conceive is intended of this promise of not removall without leave, which promise is not required of us nor made in our Church Covenant, (as wee have said) and the ground of this imputation is also a meere mistake arising from the confounding of a second answer to the objection against our first reason, with the second reason of our practise, which are distinct and have a differ-

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rent ſcope, for whereas ſome might object, that this reaſon from the Covenant, holds with ſuch as grant ſuch a Covenant lawfull, the anſwer ſaith that ſome indeed queſtion the neceſſitie of it: but wee hope you doe not queſtion the lawfulneſſe, and thereupon the anſwer firſt gives reaſons and proofes of the lawfulneſſe of it. And ſecondly, for the neceſſitie which is taken from the nature of all ſocieties incorporate, which by a fundamentall rule, doe require of all that enter into them, and partake of the priviledges thereof, to conforme to all ſuch lawfull rites and orders as are expedient for the well being of that ſociety; the contrary whereof would bee injurious to him to offer, and confuſion in them to accept; and from hence it eaſily followes, that a Church being a body of a people injoying priviledges together, it is neceſſary fundamentally that they ſhould bee joyned in ſome promiſe or Covenant, which Covenant (though in civill ſocieties it may conſiſt in rites and orders deviſed by themſelves for their good) yet in the Church which is the body of Chriſt, this Covenant is no other but to performe the duties required in the Goſpel towards God and one another, without any rites or order, deviſed by themſelves, as wee profeſſed in ſetting forth the nature of the Covenant; and this being the true ſcope of thoſe words, let any judge what ground is given by us of ſuch an imputation of deviſing rites, &c. Neither doth the ſecond reaſon in the anſwer give any ground of this imputation; for though it diſpute from the neceſſary ruine of the Church, and all Churches, if it were lawfull for any member when, whither and wherefore hee pleaſe to depart from the Church without conſent: yet there is not one ſyllable that gives an hint of any rite, cuſtome or order deviſed by us, to prevent the ſame, but for the avoyding thereof wee ſtill wholly and onely bind our ſelves to the rule of the Word, to direct, order, and reforme all actions of this nature, and to ſhew unto men whether they may lawfully remove or not remove, not requiring any expreſſe promiſe to the contrary in this particular no more then in others; and thus wee hope wee have reſolved you of our practiſe, as you deſired. To conclude this paſſage, give us leave without offence to ſay thus much.

Although (through the grace of Chriſt) we deſire humbly to ſubmit to this part of our tryall, even to goe through evill report as well as good, yea all the reproaches and cruell mockings of the world, knowing that wee have deſerved much more from the

the hand of that God without whose providence a tongue could not move against us; yet wee cannot but account it one of our poorest afflictions to suffer in this kind, from the pens or tongues of our dearly beloved brethren, for whom wee daily pray, and to whom wee hope wee shall never bee provoked to returne any other language then savouring of love and respect. But wee must confesse wee meet with so many sore criminations, (oft upon meere mistakes) cast not onely upon our selves, but the truth and wayes of God, which wee professe, and that both by this learned author and some others, that wee cannot be so senseless of the dishonour is reflected upon the truth of God herein, as wholly to bee silent, and groane out the griefe of our spirits to him that knoweth our hearts: wherefore wee humbly beseech all our godly brethren, to beare with us a little, if after all the harsh passages of this Reply, such an heape of accusations as are here throwne upon us, move us to present to the Reader a short view of such things as are unjustly and ungroundedly cast upon us, and which wee cannot but thinke hath drawne a black cloud over the glory of the holy Discipline of Christ which hee hath here set up among us.

To omit the generall frame of this Reply, in presenting our opinions and wayes to the people as if wee concurred generally with those of the Rigid separation, and differed almost in every thing from such godly brethren as have breathed after puritie of Ordinances and Reformation.

To omit also the frequent inserting of such termes unto our questions and arguments contrary to the true state thereof, which render every thing harsh and full of rigidnesse to the eares of the Reader as have been observed by us.

And omitting also divers other suppositions and objections, we shall onely desire those who have taken up evill thoughts concerning these Churches and the wayes of Christ wee walke in from this Reply, to note these particular imputations in this short Chapter, and upon what grounds they are built.

As page 79. That wee hinder men from entrance into Church society, because they cannot promise continuance in the Place, and running upon this straine he saith:

Was it ever heard of in the Church of God from the beginning thereof unto this day, that any such thing was propounded unto and required of members, to bee admitted into Church fellowship? Here is a loud

outcry, and who would not think but that we usually propound and require such a thing in our admissions, (which yet is nothing so.) But what is the ground of all this? Looke a little before and hee saith, *If* such a promise be required.

Againe *ibidem* saith hee, wee thinke the Church is over-rigid in exacting such a condition of the members, and the members goe beyond their measure as busie bodies, and what is the ground? It followes, *If* they arrogate such a power to themselves.

So page next 80. In the word it is not commanded that no member should remove or occasionally be absent from the place of his habitation before he have acquainted the congregation whither he goeth, on what occasion, &c. To what end is this inserted if not to suggest that there is such a practise among us that a man may not occasionally be absent, &c. which is far from us? And what is the ground see a few lines after, The Church shall burthen herselfe, &c. *If* shee take upon her to intermeddle in all such occasions.

And immediatly after, wee feare the time appointed for religious exercises should bee profaned by unseasonable disputes.

But what is the ground of this feare conceived and published to the world, *viz.* *If* such businesses must bee determined on the Lords day? and that before the Ordinances, &c. because it seemes *Robinson* in case of some notorious obstinate offender, would have some censure passed to prevent pollution of an Ordinance; and is this ground sufficient?

Againe in the same page (for these things are thick sowne) *Herein*, saith he, *you have devised an expedient or necessary rite or custome to preserve unity, &c.* but if you seeke a ground it will bee found a mistake, as is shewed before, and contrary to the expresse profession of the Answer, That wee promise no new duties, but onely such as the Gospell requires of all Saints in Church order, much lesse doe wee set up new rites and customes.

And as if all these particular imputations in the compasse of one leafe were two little, Page next 81. wee have a whole Catalogue gathered together from other places and this, that by laying things together the *odium* raised might stick the deeper: for thus the words are, *But to presse customes expedient for the time as standing rules, necessary at all times and all persons; To put authority in the hands of men which God never put upon them, and to oblige them to intermeddle; To bind the consciences of men, and that upon so heavy a penaltie as the sinne of* Ananias *and* Saphira, *where God hath not bound it;*

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To debarre knowne Christians from the seales, because they cannot promise to abide in the Church as setled members; and yet charge them in the meane season against light to refuse subjection to the Gospel. Concerning all which wee doe not know any of them to be true, not approve any such thing in any, if it should be found among us. And what is the ground of all this? Truely weake enough (as hath been shewed in our discourse) and here it is the suspicion of the Author, for thus hee adds, This is that wee cannot approve, and yet wee *suspect* will follow from your judgement.

These things wee have thus briefly presented in one view not to dishonour the learned and reverend Author, whose memory wee honour; two things we charitably take notice of, to remove over hard thoughts of him: First, wee consider his spirit might bee over grieved and provoked to this harshnesse by the withdrawings of many Christians from the Ordinances of God because dispensed according to the corrupt Liturgy, in which cause he stood too farre ingaged, and supposing *New-England* wayes the cause of it, he was the more sharpe.

Secondly, wee consider that this Reply was not intended by him to be published to the world, but to be sent unto us, and therefore he is in our hearts the lesse blamable.

But seeing these things are now published, and the harshnesse thereof may do much hurt, wee were pressed to cleare our selves, wherein if any thing reflect upon the Author or Publishers, wee cannot avoyd it.

Neither doe wee write thus as if wee would wholly justifie our selves and all the particular miscarriages that happily at one time or other, in some Church or other may have happened; we have much cause to humble our selves before our God and abase our selves to the dust before men, for all the weakenesses, sinnes, errors and miscarriages that have beene found among us, in one kind and another.

Onely this wee may professe before the Lord and his people, that in the maine scope of our hearts and indeavours of our lives wee have sought after such a forme of worship, and frame of discipline, as we could conceive by the Word of God and the helpe of the best Reformers to bee according to the will of Christ, not allowing our selves in any evill discovered unto us, but bewayling our great defects in all.

And here wee crave leave to put you in mind of what you have considered Reply.

already, That the Church and every member have entered into Covenant, to take God for their God, &c. but wee never finde that they were called to give account of the worke of grace wrought in their soules, or that the whole Congregation were to bee judge thereof. You stand here all this day (saith Moses) before the Lord your God, &c. that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God. All that were borne in the wildernesse Joshua *circumcised, but it is uncredible to thinke there was none that did not give good testimony of the worke of grace, &c.*

Because it is a principall thing, especially in the builders of the Church, to know their materials, and because the reverend and learned Author steps somewhat out of his way to call us to give answer in this controversie of such great weight, (especially in this present turne of times) wee shall therefore gladly accept of this occasion to declare our selves, with as much brevity as we may, to the two branches of the questi on.

Qu. First, Whether the members of the Church are called to give an account of the worke of grace at there admission thereunto.

Answ. 1. Secondly, Whether the whole Church is to be judge hereof.

Whether the members of the Church be called, &c.

For answer to which wee shall expresse our selves in these particulars, to prevent mistakes. First, that the question is not of what may keepe a Church already constituted from being accounted no Church, but of what is to bee required of such as joyne unto a Church, for a Church may bee a true Church, and yet be very corrupt, (as is generally observed by Protestant writers, both out of the examples of some Churches in the New Testament, and that of the Old in the great Apostasie thereof) wee thinke (in this same) Doctor *Fields* expressions may be safely received: *Some professe Christ* (saith hee) *but not wholly and intirely, as Heretiques: some professe the whole saving truth, but not in unity, as Schismatiques: some professe it in unty, but not in sincerity, as prophaine persons and Hypocrites: some in unity and sincerity: all these are partakers of the heavenly calling by profession of the truth, and consequently in some degree and sort the Church &c.* But (wee thinke that (this is no argument, that either Heretiques, Schismatickes, prophane persons, or Hypocrites (if convictively discovered that such are meet matter to be joyned to a Church.

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Secondly, when a worke of grace is required and desired of those who

who are to joyne to a Church, the meaning is not as if wee allowed none to bee of the Church, but *reall Saints*, and such as give demonstrative evidence of being members of the invisible Church; for we professe (according to the Scripture and generall doctrine of all reformed Churches (what ever their practise bee) that it is not *reall*, but visible faith, not the inward being, but the outward profession of faith, (whence men are called visible Saints) that constitutes a visible Church, which faith so professed is called visible, not in the judgement of certainty, from such infallible signes of it, as may demonstrate the hidden being of it within; but in the judgement of charity which hopes the best (1 Cor. 12 7) in the weakest Christian and meanest profession, even when it sometimes feares the worst, and is not able at the present, to convince the contrary.

Thirdly this judgment of charity (concerning the truth of anothers profession, or that which is called the worke of grace) is to be regulated by the word, which Christ hath left as a compleat rule, not onely of faith but also of love, and charity to guide both in their acts unto their ends: and hence large professions and long relations of the worke of grace (though full of exceeding glory, when humbly and prudently made) wee exact not rigorously and necessarily of all, because the rule of charity directs us not so to judge; because many Christians may bee drawne to Christ, and have a seed of faith, yet may sometimes not know it, sometimes remember not the working of it, sometimes (through bashfulnesse, feare, want of parts, nor not trained up under a knowing Ministery) not be able to professe it so fully and clearely; hence also to keepe out others from Communion out of groundlesse feares, that all their profession might bee in hypocrisie, wee allow not, because no man in his charity is to bee ruled by his feares, but by the word; hence also to account any unfit for the Church, because their hearts cannot close with them, or because they like not their spirits, speake not with favour or any such like principles, and yet can give no rule or convicting argument from the word, why thus they doe, we thinke is rigour, not charity regulated by the word; for humane charity doth not make Gods Church, but such persons which from God according to the rule of Gods charity, is to receive, and therefore the rule is to be attended here: it is necessary to looke for a ground of certainty to faith, but not for charity, which cannot bee infallibly

fallibly certaine of anothers estate, and therefore upon a hopefull supposition that the premises their profession is true, hopefully onely makes the conclusion.

The question being brought to this narrow, it will here lye, *viz.*

First, Whether profession of the worke of grace, and faith be not required of those that enter into the Church.

Secondly, With what profession of the worke of grace, charity (according to a rule) is to rest satisfied.

1. The first wee thinke is writ with the beames of the Sunne, for it is evident, that neither the Lord in the Old Testament, *Exod.* 19. or in the New Testament, *Acts* 2 and in other like Scriptures, did call for a profession of the *Doctrine* of faith onely, but especially of the worke of faith; for when the Lord promised to be a God to his people, *Exod.* 19. *Deut.* 29. it was not with this condition, if they did beleeve his word to bee true, &c. but if they will heare his voyce, and keepe his Covenant, which (in a prepared people) is a manifestation of a worke of grace. So when the Apostles were required to goe preach to all Nations, and baptize them and teach them, looke as they did require such a faith as was saving, (he that beleeveth shall bee saved) so upon the profession thereof they did receive them, as also appeares, *Acts* 2. 38. (which therefore could not bee of the doctrine of faith, for that the devils doe, and tremble, and profane men of much knowledge, may doe, and yet unfit to bee received, and therefore it was of the worke of faith, and therefore *Act.* 8. 37. *Philip* not onely requires faith, but a beleeving with all the heart of the *Eunuch*, and upon such a profession baptized him: and hence the Churches erected by the Apostles at *Corinth*, *Colosse*, *Ephesus*, &c. are called Saints, and sanctified of God in Christ Jesus, &c. How! was it because *debito* and *de jure* onely, they should be so? then all who heare the Gospell (though they reject it) might bee called a Church, for *de jure*, they ought to be so; Or was it because there were some that were truely such amongst them, and so *in concreto*, are called a Church and body of Christ? not onely so, for there may be some visible Churches of visible Saints, and yet none among them of the invisible Church, unlesse any will thinke, that to bee of the Church invisible is essentiall to the being and title of a visible Church: and therefore it was from their profession of saving faith which they maintained

tained being a Church, as it was required to the gathering into a Church: *John Baptist* also, (though hee baptized none into a new Church, (and therefore might require the lesse) yet as he really promised remission of sinnes by the Messiah; so hee required that very faith and repentance which might make them partakers of this heavenly benefit; and therefore, if what hee required, they manifested by their profession, and confession of sinnes, it was not onely to beleeve the doctrine of faith, but a saving worke of faith which they held forth. And therefore it is not an outward profession of faith, according to a Creed which is required, for then a Papist is fit matter for a Church, nor willingnesse to heare the Word and receive the Sacraments, for then heapes of prophane persons are to bee received into the Church, but it's profession of a worke, and saving worke of grace, which being ever required in the purest times, is no novell invention of some more rigidly inclined in these things.

To the second, with what profession (charity according to rule) is to rest satisfied? 2.

Wee answer, that there is a breadth in charity according to rule and profession of faith being but *testimonium humanum*, or a mans owne testimony concerning himselfe, therefore as in the most eminent profession, *potest subesse falsum*, there may bee hypocrisie latent, (it being no divine testimony) so in the weakest profession of the worke of faith, *potest subesse verum, id est*, there may be truth in the bottome: hence (man leaving all secrets to God) the worke of grace wherewith charity is to be satisfied, is one of these two. First, either with that which is onely verball, and appeares to be false by conviction from the word: Or secondly, with that which appeares to bee reall, which however it may bee false, yet it is beyond the power of man to convince (by a rule) that so it is. We confesse wee are fearefull as of opening the doore too wide, so of shutting the doores upon any whom God would have us to receive in, but for what yet wee see or read, from the arguments here alledged in this Author, or the writings of others godly learned: wee thinke that Church charity is not to rest satisfied with the first, but with the latter; for let the profession of the worke of faith bee never so short, or so weake, let it be by their owne immediate relation or by question, yet if it may but appeare to a regulated charity so as to hope that it is *real*, it is to rest satisfied then, till God make discovery to the contrary;

contrary; wee intend not to heape up arguments, nor answer scruples, but these foure things seeme to evince as much.

1. That the Apostles in the 3000. converted *Act.* 2. as they were very ready to receive them to the fold of Christ, and therefore in one day immediatly received so many thousands (which could not bee by large profession of every one) so also they attended to the truth of that profession, and therfore it was not bare profession of faith, but (as it is set downe for our patterne) it was such a profession as was evidently joyned with humiliation, pricking at the heart, mourning, and crying out before the Apostles What shall wee doe to be saved, gladly receiving the word, which are reall testimonies of some reall change from what they were but a little before, and upon this ground the Apostles received them.

2. The Apostles charge to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. From such as have a forme of godlinesse and deny the power of it, turne away; if bare profession were sufficient, why should *Timothy* turne from them? (but rather receive them who had a forme of profession.) And if it was in his power to avoyd them, why should he not reject them, and that not onely from private but Church communion also, supposing them such as not onely had a forme, but might be by a rule convinced thereof?

Rev. 2. 2 and 3. 9. 3. Lying and apparent untruth cannot make a man fit matter for a Church, and therefore cannot bee a ground for charity to rest on, that so he is: but verball profession, which appeares not to bee reall but false, is palpable lying, and indeed more fit to destroy the Church then to make the Church. Hence *Sanctius* in *Zach.* 14. 14 observes that the greatest enemies of the Church are such, *qui cum fidem retineant sanctitatem abjecerunt.*

4. If bare profession of faith is a sufficient ground to receive men into the Church, then an excommunicate person cast out in one houre should bee immediatly received in againe, if hee will but renew his generall profession of faith, nay then the *Indians* in *Maryland*, who will put on and put off this profession, as their ghostly fathers the Popish Priests will bestow or withhold garments and shirts upon them; should in charitie bee received into the Church.

But if it should bee asked how charity may know the reality of this profession, we answer; so long as the rule bee attended wee leave every one to the wisedome of Christ, to make application

sion thereof, onely this we doe add in generall for more full satisfaction.

1 Such a faith professed with the mouth, which is confirmed by an innocent godly conversation in the life, so as not to live in commission of any knowne sinne, or omission of any knowne duty, wee say this conversation makes faith appeare reall, *James* 2. 18. *Rev.* 22. 14. wee conceive more is required to make a man appeare a fit member of a Church, then of a Commonwealth, to bee onely *bonus civis*, and bare civility is sufficient for this latter, but not for the former, and therefore such a profession of faith is needfull, as is confirmed by a not onely a civill, but a godly life.

2 Such a faith as is joyned with evident repentance, and sorrow, and mourning for sinne (although there bee no experience alwayes of such a holy life anteecedently seene) for thus it was *Act.* 2. 37, 38. for the riches of Christs grace is such as not onely to receive experienced christians into his family and house, but also the weakest and poorest (who may stand in most need of Christs Ordinances) and that as soone as ever they seeme to bee brought in; and therefore experience of a blamelesse life is not alwayes necessary for admission into the Church: some think indeed that the Apostles received in the first converts, (*Act.* 2. 39.) so soone, because they had an extraordinary spirit of discerning, but if they had so: yet they did not receive them in here according to that, for they received divers hypocrites in, as *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, &c. and if all other of their acts in this chapter were exemplary, why should this onely bee thought to be otherwise and extraordinary?

3 When there is full and sufficient testimony from others of their faith and piety, although their humiliation, faith and conversation bee not so well knowne, for wee see the Church received *Paul*, when *Barnabas* had declared what God had done for him; and if it may bee just to condemne another by the testimony of two faithfull witnesses, it may not bee unchristian to receive an other into the fold of Christ (much more readily) upon the testimony of able and faithfull Christians, especially then when they be not able openly, and publiquely to speake so fully for themselves, and thus much for answer to the first question

2 Question, Whether this profession is to bee judged by the Church.

Answer, 1. The faithfull as they did at first combine into a Church, so it is their duty to receive others to themselves, as the Church did, *Acts* 9.26,27. encouraged by *Barnabas* and the Apostles, and as the Apostle commands, *Rom.* 14. 1. which although it was of fellow-members into their affections, yet the proportion holds strong for receiving commers into the Church. *Joh. Ep.* 3.8,9,10.

2 If they bee to receive them, they must by some meanes know them, to bee such as they may comfortably receive into their affections, a little leaven leavening the whole lumpe. 1 *Cor.* 5.

3 The Officers of the Church, (who are first privately to examine them) and prepare them for admission) are to shew the Church the rule on which the Church is to receive them, and themselves are ready to admit them. *Act.* 10.37. Can any forbid water, &c.

This rule was best seene by that publike profession before the whole Church, and if no just exception bee made (as none should bee without conviction) they are to be admitted by the Officers with the consent of the members hereunto, for if publike profession is needfull at least before the Church, though not the world alway (as *Didoclavius* observes) to the entrance into the Covenant and Church by baptisme; wee see no reason, but persons formerly baptized, and entering anew into the Church, but they should openly professe their faith againe: the visible Church being built upon this rocke, *Matth.* 16. 16, 18. *viz.* Profession of the faith of Christ; and lastly, if there should be no necessity for such a profession, yet if this bee desired of the people of God, for the increase of their owne joy to see God glorified, and Christs name professed, and his vertues held forth, and for the increase of their love to those that joyne with them, why should it not be done before Saints, which should bee done before persecutors? 1 *Pet.* 3. 15.

What is now said, we thinke sufficient to undermine what is opposed herein by others, and may easily give answer to the three arguments of the learned Authour, from the example of the Church of Israel, *John Baptist* and the Apostles, and so cleare up our practise, and judgement to the world from the aspersion of our *rigidum examen* for which we are by some condemned, but for further clearing, we shall answer to the particulars.

Now

Now to your Reasons more particularly against this from the Old Testament, and the manner of entring and renewing Covenant then.

Wee answer, first, when as you say, they professing the Covenant promised to take God for their God, to keepe the words of the Covenant and doe them, to seek the Lord with all their hearts, to walke before him in truth and uprightnes, this implyeth a profession of a worke of grace. *Answ.*

Secondly, They did not immediately enter into Covenant, but the Lord was long before preparing them for it, for they were humbled much in *Egypt*, in so much as their sighings came up to God, *Exod.* 2. 23,24,25. They had seene the glory of God for their good against *Pharaoh*, and all that Land, by many miracles, they had Gods visible presence in the Cloud; were instructed by *Moses* concerning the Covenant of grace made with them in *Abraham*; they were mightily delivered at the Red Sea, so that they beleeved *Moses* and feared the Lord and sang his praise, *Exod.* 14.31. *Psalme* 106.12. They were also instructed againe concerning the Covenant, and were to sanctifie themselves three dayes legally, (which was for spirituall ends, and of spirituall use, *Exod.* 19.10.) and thus being prepared as fit matter for Covenant, they then entered thereinto. And they were all of them (for ought we know) thus externally and ecclesiastically holy, though many were internally stiffe-necked, blind and prophane.

And for our parts we desire no more then such a preparation in some worke of grace, if appearing (though not indeed) reall as may make way for Church Covenant, among a people now as we see was then.

When John Baptist *began to preach the Gospell, and gather a new people for Christ, he admitted none but upon confession of their sinnes, but we read of no question that hee put forth to them to discover the worke of grace in their soules, or repelled any upon that pretence that voluntarily submitted themselves.* *Reply.*

Though the Scripture record such things very briefly, (else the world would not have contained the Bookes that must have beene written, as *John* speaketh,) yet he that advisedly considers the case, may see the profession of a work of grace in all that were received by *John* to his baptisme. *Answ.*

First, *John* was sent with the Spirit and power of *Elias*, to turne the hearts of the fathers, &c. to cast down every high hill, &c.

Secondly, His baptisme is called the baptisme of repentance, for the remission of sinnes, *Mark.* 1.4.

Thirdly, confession of sins is ever put for true repentance, when there is a promise of pardon made to it, *Prov.* 28. 13. 1 *John* 1.9. and therefore when he requires confession of sins, was it without remorse or sorrow for it? was it not with profession of faith in the Messiah, which he pointed unto, *Joh.* 1.29. and required with repentance, *Act.* 19.4.

Fourthly, did not hee fall upon the Pharisees with dreadfull thundering of Gods judgements, for comming to his baptisme without conversion of heart, and fruits meet for repentance? *Mat.* 3. 7. and this *Luke* saith, hee preached to the multitude, *Luke* 3.7. and whether any were received that embraced not that Doctrine, and shewed the same in their confession, *viz.* that their hearts were humbled, and that the renounced their high thoughts of their priviledges of the Law, &c. and professed amendment & fruits meet for the same, it will be hard for any to prove: and thus much is evident: on the contrary that Pharesees & Lawyers distinguished from the People and Publicans rejected the counsell of God in not being baptized of him, and what counsell but that wholesome doctrine of *John*, *Luke* 7.29,30? Lay all these together, and let any whose thoughts are not prepossessed with prejudice, say, whether this confession was not such a profession of faith and repentance, which a discerning charity ought to take for a worke of grace.

Reply. *Acts* 2. 38. 8. 37. 19 17, 18, &c.

It appeares many wayes that when the Apostles planted Churches, they made a Covenant betweene God and the people whom they received. But they received men upon the profession of faith, and promise of amendment of life, without strict inquiry what worke of grace was wrought in the soule, so in after ages, &c. Now the profession at first required of all that were received to baptisme, was that they beleeved in the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost. This was the confession of the Eunuch, when he was baptized: I beleeve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

sw. Wee cannot but observe how still the evidence of the truth of what wee proved in the third and fourth positions, breakes out at every turne, when the heat of that disputation doth not hinder, for if the Apostles planted Churches and made a Covenant betweene God and the people when they baptized them, as the prooses for this *Act.* 2. 38. and 8. 37. and 19. 17, 18, 19. alledged in the margent shew, then still it appeares they admitted men into planted Churches when they baptized them, and therefore the Apostles ordinary and first leading practise and examples

amples are for those Position, not against them.

2. You grant here that *Acts* 2. and 8. and 19. there was a profession of faith and promise of amendment of life, and so wee must suppose though not expressed, for how else could the Apostles distinguish such as gladly received the word, from the mockers and others?

Now let us consider what kinde of profession this must bee by the story it selfe. The Apostle *Peter* in his doctrine presseth three things. 1. Conversion or repentance for their sinnes: 2. Faith in Christ in those words, *Bee baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, Verse 38. 3. With many other words he exhorted them, saying, *Save your selves from this untoward generation*, that is, this was the scope of and substance of his exhortation, which includes a gathering themselves to the Church. Now the Text saith, in respect of the first, *That they were pricked to the heart, and cryed out Men, and Brethren what shall wee doe?* 2. They gladly received the word, that is of faith in Christ, and the duty of obedience to the Gospell, and how did all this appeare, but by their profession? and what kinde of confession can any man think such soules would make, but a broken hearted gracious confession, which to any discerning charity must be taken to argue a worke of grace? so that the very character given of them by the holy Ghost, in so briefe an History, doth cleerely evince what we contend for.

Consider also the story, *Acts* 8. and first, not to passe over what is said of *Simon Magus*, of whom it is said, *Hee beleeved, was baptized, continued with Philip, and wondered*, so that no doubt they took him for a true beleever, but when *Peter* discovered his falsnesse, see what hee saith, Verse 21. *Thou hast no part nor lot in this matter*, and the reason is, *For thy heart is not right in the sight of God.* Let any here consider, that if hee had no part nor lot in Christ and baptisme, &c. because not right, whether the Apostle *Peter* or the Church would have received him, if such had been discovered before.

And for the *Eunuch*, *Philip* requiring his profession of faith, *If thou beleevest with all thy heart*, looked for a sound worke of grace, and though it was delivered in those words which are the Fundamentall truth, *That Jesus is the Sonne of God*, yet it includes true faith in him for salvation: as wee see our Saviour Christ takes that confession of *Peter* for true faith, *Flesh and blood have not revealed that to thee, but my Father*: and promised

to build the Church on this rocke, *Matth.* 16. Yea it includes subjection unto him as the Sonne of God, the Prophet and King of his Church, and this is no rare, but a common thing in the New Testament, by one fundamentall truth, beleeved and confessed, to include true faith and profession of the whole tryth that suites with that foundation, as *Rom.* 10. 9. so expounded, Verse 10, 11. as being more then historicall faith, so 1 *John* 4. 1, 2. and 5. 1.

The like characters of a penitent and gracious carriage and confession may be observed, *Act.* 19. 17, 18, 19.

And seeing you have given us this occasion to lay downe some grounds of our practise from the first patternes, we shall add a word or two to take away the conceit of novelty, which is imputed to us in this point as much as in any thing else. *Tertullian* saith in his booke of prescriptions, *Wee admit no man to any disputation about divine things, unlesse hee first have showed us of whom he received the faith and became a Christian; and secondly, whether hee admit and hold the generall principles, wherein all Christians doe and ever did agree, otherwise proscribing against him as an alien from the Common-wealth of Israel.* And if in those times they were so strict in admitting men to disputations, no doubt much more in receiving men to Church Communion. But if this seeme not full enough, take another: in the Churches of old, there were *Catechumeni*, instructed for enterance into the Church by baptisme, with whom they tooke much paines in sanctifying them, before; by fasting and prayer, and often preaching to them. And for their admission, there were foure things in use among them, 1. *Nominis professio*, 2. *Scrutinium*, 3. *Abrenuntiatio*, 4. *Fidei professio.* Their *Scrutinium* which they call *Examen competentium*, or the examination of such as were competent, or fitting for admission, This *Examen* was very strict as is observed out of *Alcuinus*, by learned * *Chamier*, *Fiant scrutinia, ut explorentur sæpius, an post renuntiationum Satanæ, sacra verba datæ fidei radicitus corde defixerint, i. e.* Let examinations be made, that it oft may bee tryed, whether they have deeply fixed in the heart the sacred words of their professed faith. And what ever any may thinke of the strictnesse of that their discipline, in this point *Chamier* gives a large testimony, by way of approbation of the same, whose words upon it are these, *Certe nemo improbare potest seriam in tam sanctis rebus diligentiam, ne quantum*

Cham de Bap. lib. 5. cap. 19.

fieri

fieri poterit lateant Simones, &c. i. Certainely no man can disallow such serious diligence, to prevent profanation of sacred things, lest (so farre as it is possible) such as *Simon Magus* may lye hid: And saith hee, the Apostles went before in their examples, for *Philip, Acts* 8. being demanded of the Eunuch, *What hinders mee that I may not bee baptized?* hee answereth not simply thou mayst, but with this supposition added, if thou beleevest with thy whole heart. Now this profession of their faith was either by reciting the Creed in an eminent place before all the people, and that *præclarâ fiduciâ*, with full affiance, as hee observes out of *Clement* and *Augustine*, or else *respondendo interroganti Sacerdoti per singula in subsidium forte pudoris aut memoriæ, i. e.* By answering to the Minister propounding questions, concerning their faith for helpe of their bashfulnesse, or want of memory.

Also *Beza* in his Epist. 14. Commending much the severity and zeale of former Pastors and Churches in this kind, and bemoaning the negligence of such as followed, from whence hee saith it is, that the Church without a miracle could not rise out of its filth, he concludes thus, *Itaque frustra disputabitur tum voce tum scriptis, nisi conversione cordium & ἀναζωπυρήσει initium instaurationis sumatur.*

Reverend Mr. *Hilderſam* in his treatise of the doctrine of the Lords Supper, to that question, whether the people that come to the Lords Table, bee bound to make knowne their knowledge and spirituall estate to their Pastor. Answers thus, yes verily, for seeing, *Matth.* 3. 6. *Acts* 8. 37. God required of them, that (being of yeares of discretion) were to bee baptized, that they should make knowne to the Congregation or their Minister their, faith and repentance, hee doth every whit as much require this of them that are to come to the Lords Supper. Whereby we see, 1. that his judgement was that, *Act.* 8. and *Mat.* 3. the people did make known their spirituall estate to the congregation or Minister, when they professed faith and repentance: and secondly, that the same ought now so to bee. Lastly, We may appeale herein to the consciences of very many godly Ministers, in our deare *England*, whether they groane not under the mixture of the precious with the vile, in the Ordinances of Christ, and would not gladly have it otherwise, which cannot bee without such a way of admissions into the Church as we plead for,

for, or else in constituted (but corrupted) Churches, by casting out such as after admonitions appeare impenitent in sin, by the severity of discipline.

And this was evident by the qualifications of persons to be received to the Lords Table, voted at first by the present Reverend Assembly, and presented in their Directory to the Parliament, if wee bee not mis-informed: whose words are these, *None are to bee admitted thereto (meaning the Lord Suppers) but such as being baptized are found upon carefull examination by the Minister, before the other Church-Officers, to have a competent measure of knowledge and ability to examine themselves, and professe their willingnesse to submit themselves to all the Ordinances of Christ, and are of approved conversation according to Christ: the ignorant and scandalous are not to bee admitted, nor those of another Congregation, unlesse they have sufficient testimony or be very well knowne.*

If it bee objected, that some of these instances concerne unbaptized persons onely, which is not our case; *Answ.* 1. Multitude of baptized persons in these dayes are as ignorant and prophane as some unbaptized; and therefore as apt to pollute Gods Ordinances: 2. *Chamiers* reason, why unbaptized persons were to go under such strict examination, holds good in our case. 3. Such profession of faith was required by *John* and the Apostles of those that were Church members before.

Reply. *The Creed is honored by the Ancients with glorious titles, as the rule of faith, &c. by which they understood that rule of faith given by Christ, when hee was about to ascend, and commanded his Disciples, saying, Goe teach al Nations. In after times some Articles were added for explanation, to meet with the heresies of those times, but for substance, the Church never required other acknowledgement, &c.*

Answ. If you meane that which is called the Apostles Creed, it is justly doubted whether it bee so ancient, however, the times which followed the Scripture patterns, are both obscure to us, and no infallible pattern, yet many Churches used great strictnesse, as is shewed, in receiving and restoring fallen members, and if afterward heresies gave just occasion to require further professions of the doctrine of faith, and to add more articles for explanation, why may not the Churches require a more explicate confession of the work of faith and repentance, the formality and meere outside profession of so many Civilists, Formalists, and Atheists requiring the same?

If

If you put man to declare that worke of grace God hath wrought in this or that way, which perhaps is not determined by the word of grace, at least not agreed upon amongst your selves, wee beseech you to consider by what authority you doe it, and upon what ground you stand. Reply.

This is but upon a supposition, if so &c. which is contrary to our judgement, and professed practise to limit the spirit of grace in the workings of it. If any have so done, (as it may bee in the times of opinions prevailing among us) wee doe not owne it, but disapprove the same. It is enough for us to see any have some way, or by some meanes or other beene humbled for sinne, brought home to Christ by faith, or have any breathings of the Spirit of Christ, with a life answerable to the Faith of Christ. Answ.

CHAP. XVI.

Position 7.

That a Minister is so a Minister of a particular Congregation, that if they dislike him or leave him unjustly, hee ceaseth to be a Minister.

The question is of Ministers unjustly forsaken or driven from the Church, and your answer is for most part of Ministers, set aside or deprived by their owne default: wee never purposed to speake one word for an unworthy Minister, whom Christ hath put out of Office, and therefore your labour to prove that such justly rejected by the the Church, are no longer Ministers, might well have beene saved. Reply.

The ground of this Position being about the Nature of a Ministers Office; Whether it consist in his Office, relation to the flocke of a particular Church: the former part of our answer was not in vaine, nor the grounds impertinent, and wee accept your grant of it, That a Minister justly rejected by his Church is no longer a Minister: then wee inferre that there is no indelible character in the Office, but that his Ministery stands in relation to a particular flocke, not to the Catholike Church, for then a particular Church could not dissolve his Office, and therefore it will follow, that (if hee bee found worthy after) upon repentance to bee called to another Church, hee must bee Answ.

new elected and ordained to his Office, being no Minister upon his just deposing.

Reply. *But wee will examine your conclusions upon which you build the sentence which you passe against them; first it is certaine, &c.*

Answ. What is said to the first is spoken before, and we will not repeat things in vaine.

Reply. Secondly, *The power of feeding, which the Minister hath, is neither confined to one society onely, nor nextly derived to him from Christ by the Church. The Office and authority of a Pastour is immediately from Christ, the deputation of the person which Christ hath designed is from the Church ministerially, but neither vertually nor formally.*

Answ. These things about the call of a Minister by the Church were also spoken to before, when wee spake of the power of the Keys, and the first subject thereof, and therefore the assertion being granted, these things might well be spared, but what we finde here more then in the other place, we shall consider.

The power of the Church in electing her Officers is so cleare in the Scripture, and so confessed a truth by the godly learned, that it cannot bee denyed, yet here seeme to be given so many restrictions in the case, that they much abate and weaken this great and precious liberty and power given by the Lord. 1. That the power and Office of a Pastor is immediately from Christ by his institution is granted, but the question is, how this man comes to have this Office applyed to him; if immediately, then hee is in this an Apostle, if mediately, it is by the Church, or else shew by whom. 2. That the Church choose Ministerially, and ought to choose whom Christ hath described in his word, and fitted with gifts, and so farre designed by Christ wee grant, but what if there bee twenty such? Which of them doth Christ designe, but whom the Church freely choose? and therefore that is no diminution of their power, that they must choose ministerially, and whom Christ so designes. The case is alike in all other Ordinances dispensed, Examination is immediately from Christ, by his institution, the person to be censured is designed or described by Christ, a notorious or obstinate sinner: the Church passe this sentence onely Ministerially, and yet puts forth a great power of the Lord Jesus Christ, in applying the sentence to this or that person: and so here: and therefore it is strange to us, that any should say they depute this Officer neither vertually nor formally, when

as the act which they put forth, (which is the outward call of the Officer) must needs come from a power formally in the Church to doe the same, as well as when the Church or Officers censure an offender, &c.

The consent of the people is requisite in the election of Pastors and Teachers, we grant, the direction of the Elders going before, or along with them, Acts 1. Peter declared what an one should be taken, &c. Acts 6. Deacons were chosen by the consent of the Church, &c. but in this election the people did first choose, when most commonly the Apostles instructed the people, and went before them in the election, and they consented. Act. 14. 23. The Apostles by consent choose, &c. Reply. Answ.

This restriction of the peoples power to an after consent, at least ordinarily, will not hold: if the evident light of *Acts 6.* could not be denyed, and the other places were more obscure, why should not that place with its light cleare the rest? but that in *Act.* 1. is as evident, *Peter* proves the need of such a choice to be made, shews it must bee one that had so long conversed with Christ, to witnesse such things, and further hee doth not lead them, there might be twenty such, but they choose two, as a preparative act to Apostleship, Vers. 23. and who were they, but such as they speake unto, *viz.* the Disciples, Vers. 15. whom he cals Men and Brethren, Vers. 16. so *Act.* 14. 23. lifting up of hands is the signe of election, not of an after consent.

Lastly, by this Doctrine how shall the Church come by Officers, when shee hath none to goe before her in choosing for her? must shee loose her right, or take whom others will choose for her, and impose upon her?

In the primitive times, after the Apostles, one Church might elect a Pastor for another, &c. Reply.

1 If by way of counsell one Church shall propound and advise another to choose such, (leaving them free to take or refuse) this is lawfull in case, but otherwise it is a plaine usurpation and we must leave Scripture rules and patterns to justifie it. Answ.

2 Wee grant in a safe sense there may be *Communis electio*, whereby a fit man is propounded by Churches or Ministers to be chosen by another people, and thus the *Philadelphians* might elect a fit Pastor for the Church at *Antioch*, (as *Ignatius* exhots) with sundry like instances in the first times after the Apostles, and this wee deny not may lawfully bee now. But this is nothing to that *electio singularis*, whereby a people choose one to be their

Minister, of which we speake, for it is evident from the Testimony of *Cyprian* oft alledged, that it is in the power of the people to choose worthy Ministers, and reject the unworthy; and *Ambrose* thinkes that he is worthily thought to bee elected *divino judicio*, whom all the people desire. *Ambros. lib.* 10. *Ep.* 82.

It is very true, that as the times grew worse, the elections were oft disturbed, sometimes by the Clergy choosing without the people, (of which *Athanasius* complaines) sometimes by the peoples carrying it tumultuously: sometime the Emperors interposing.

But this and like corruptions cannot forfeit the liberty of the Church which Christ hath given it, and therefore hee that was no great friend to the peoples liberties, yet ingenuously saith that although the people is *Bellua multorum capitum*, and most apt to be tumultuous, yet this is not innated to a beleeving people, *qui non minus nunc quam olim gravis esset in electionibus, ac publicæ utilitatis studiosissimus, Spalta. de Rep. Eccles. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 3.

Reply. *If here it be questioned, whether your election of the people be essentiall to the calling of a Minister, wee answer,* First, *A thing is essentiall two wayes, either as absolutely necessary, so as the thing can have no existence without it; or necessary to the integrity of a thing, so that it is maymed without it. Againe the people be either few in number, and simple, unable to judge of the sufficiency of a Minister, or they be more in number, increased in wisedome, sound in faith, and able to discerne of things that differ. In the first sense the election of the people is not necessary or essentiall, in the second, his calling in that respect is maymed.*

Answ. It is to bee noted, that here wee dispute of the outward calling of Church-Officers; now the very essence of any outward calling, doth lye in the right and power of them that elect. If all the Countries of *England* should elect or call a Lord Major for *London*, bee they never so many and wise, it is a meere nullity, and why? Because the right of election is not in them, but if the Citizens in whom the right lyes, doe elect (though weakly) hee hath the true essence of the call: if others electing a Major the City will receive him, submit to him, and so give their consent, hee may bee said to have the substance of that call, though not an orderly and lawfull election, and so maymed: so it is here.

Secondly, if in our election of the people (being the Scripture

ture way of election,) the proper right and power bee seated by Christ in the Church, unto whom they are to ministe, then it must needs follow, that the very essence of a Ministers call stands in their election, or at least in their after consent and subjection to his Ministery, in which case wee grant though the calling be maymed, yet it hath the substance of a true calling. But if the people will not receive such as are imposed upon them, hee hath no call at all, but usurpes the same, and it is a meer nullity. And therefore it concernes Churches the more to consider, what they doe in receiving and submitting to such unworthy Ministers, as are oft imposed upon them; but if the right and power of electing Ministers bee in any other Persons, let it be shewed from the Scriptures, for we are not much moved in such cases with the corrupt customes of after-times.

And this also shewes what kinde of call such men have that are ordained by Prelates at large without any election at all, if they be Ministers to the Catholike Church, then the Catholike Church is bound to receive them, and submit to their Office, but no part of the Catholike Church, and therefore not the whole is bound to submit to them, and therefore indeed they have no office nor calling as Pastors or Teachers, except it can be proved they be Evangelists, Apostles or Prophets.

Reply. *If the people be few and simple, they stand in more need of guidance from their owne Elders and other Churches; If many and full of wisdome, their liberty to choose is the greater, and the greater wrong to bee deprived of it. The practise of the Apostles and Primitive Churches shew this for many ages, sometime men were propounded to the Church to be chosen, sometimes the chiefe left wholly to them.*

Answ. 1 What is all this to the purpose, what light or direction a Church need to receive? the essence of a Ministers call lyes not in the propounding or advising of any to elect him, but in the Election of such as have the true right so to doe, which is still in the Church, though few and weake, if a true Church, and yet you produce not one Scripture example of any Officer propounded by the Apostles, or Elders to the Church to be chosen by them, much lesse limiting the Church to consent thereto, if they had nothing against him.

Reply. *In reason this is evident, for the Childs consent is required in marriage, but the more able he is to choose for himselfe, the more liberty may Parents grant, the lesse able the more watchfull must they be.*

This similitude utterly faileth in two essentiall things, that concerne the case for which it is applyed. 1. Because a childe is under the authority of the parents, whose right is such that a Childe cannot lawfully choose without them. But there is no Church or others have such a right and authority over any Church in their choice of Officers. 2. Whatsoever the power of parents bee, yet the essence of the marriage consists in the mutuall consent and promise of the children that marry, and so here the essence of a Ministers call must lye in the election of the Church and acceptance of the Minister which is not avoided but by the similitude confirmed.

Reply. *It is a duty of neighbour Churches to lend their helpe to their brethren in election of their Ministers, when the Scripture willeth us to exhort one another or admonish one another, it is not onely a command to every singular person towards his fellow, but also to any whole company.*

Answ. Wee grant all this, and that it is the duty of a Church, bee it weake or strong, to take all needfull counsell, advise or exhortations and admonitions in so weighty a worke. But if Churches or others shall impose upon any Church any Officer without their choice, this is no brotherly helpe, but unjust usurpation. And if you understand *Junius* so, as that *Charitatis jure & Communione sanctorum*, one Church have power to choose for another, other wayes, then by advising them to elect such an one for themselves, wee see no reason for that, nor doe wee thinke it is his meaning: neither doth *Paul*, *Rom.* 12. 12. lay any foundation of such usurpations, but onely of mutuall brotherly helpfulnesse by counsell, &c. and the contrary is not Policy, but some degree of tyranny.

Reply. *It is a blemish in the call of a Minister, if either the people be not fit to choose, or being fit they be shut out from the chocie, but this maime doth not make a nullity in his calling.*

Answ. If a people or Church bee never so weake, which is here called unfitnesse, yet Christ being amongst them, and they making an orderly and good choice, there can be no blemish in the call seeing the right is them, and such a free choice will better stablish the conscience of any godly Minister in his call, then if a Synod of the ablest Ministers should impose him without their free choice, except it can bee proved that the right of election is in the Synod, which we thinke will not bee done. But bee they able or weake, if the people be shut out, it must needs make a great maim in his call,

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and if they doe not consent nor submit to such a one called by others, it will make it a nullity, as was shewed before. What authority hath hee to Minister to any Church, if they will refuse him? or who shall censure them for refusing, by any rule of Christ?

The saving truth of God and a lawfull Ministery are both essentiall to a true Church. *Reply.*

Answ. What then becomes of the Church when the Minister is dead? *Answ.*

The true Church hath continued by the blessing of God where the election of Ministers hath beene given away by the people or taken from them. *Reply.*

True; but it hath been continued by the after consent, and subjection of the people to their Ministers chosen by others, else they must needs have broken a pieces and dissolved the Church, or taken upon them to choose others to themselves, which still shewes that the essence of the call is in the people. What is said of the disorders of Ancient Churches in elections, we passe over as nothing to this purpose. That the Ministery might bee lawfull for substance, where there were many defects in the manner of the call we grant, the Church at length consenting to submit thereto, in whom the true right is placed by Christ: and therefore we passe over what followes to that purpose, though wee might object against some passages in the discourse. *Answ.*

As for the second branch of your answer we know not well your meaning; if this be your minde, that a Minister lawfully called and set over the Congregation, is to bee esteemed a Minister in the usuall Church, as the particular Church hath unity with, and is part of the universall or Catholique, and as a party baptized is not baptized into that Congregation onely, but into all Churches, and that the Ministery is one, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur, *as* Cyprian *speaketh, and therefore though the Minister be unjustly cast off by one Congregation, yet hee is not to be esteemed as no Minister, wee freely consent. But if your meaning bee, that hee is onely by right a Minister of that particular Congregation, because unjustly deposed, as formerly in the execution of his Office, hee was a Minister to them onely, and to no other society whatsoever, or in what respect soever, your opinion is contrary to the opinion of the universall, and tends to destroy the unity of the Church, and that Communion which the Churches of God ought to have one with another.* *Reply.*

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Answ. First, If our meaning be doubtfull, seeing these expressions doe not well suite our notion, nor fully enter into our understanding, we shall give the meaning of our answer distinctly, and then consider what is here said.

First, there is a difference betweene the unjust leaving or casting off a Minister, without all orderly proceedings against him, and the unjust deposing him in an orderly way of Church censure: if the question be taken in the first sense, he remaines every way and in every respect by right a Minister as hee was before, except he reject them, and so dissolve the relation that was between them. But if the question speak of an orderly censure of deposition unjustly, then we judge of that case as we would do in any other, censure of a member by excommunication, & therefore we say, he is stil a Minister, *in foro interno* before Christ, for *clavis errans non ligat*. Secondly, in respect of that Church he hath stil right truly to minister to them, and is their Minister though unjustly hindered in the execution of his Ministery, as a member unjustly censured hath a true right to the Ordinances, and membership, though unjustly hindred from the same, though *in foro externo*, we grant to them or in their account he is no Minister, as a person excommunicated is to them no member.

Thirdly, in respect of other Churches, if it doth appeare unto them that hee is unjustly deposed, they may and ought to esteeme him still, and receive him and have communion with him, as a true Minister of Jesus Christ, in the Church he doth belong to, as they may do with a member unjustly cast out, but til that appeare unto them, they cannot so esteem and honor him, (being orderly deposed but must at least suspend their judgment til the case be cleared.

Fourthly we answer clearely and plainely to the chiefe scope of the question, If a Minister bee unjustly deposed or forsaken by his particular Church, and he also withall renounce and forsake them, so farre as all Office and relation betweene them cease, then is hee no longer an Officer or Pastour in any Church of God, whatsoever you will call it. And the Reason is, because a Ministers office in the Church is no indelible Character, but consists in his relation to the flocke: and if a Minister once ordained, his relation ceasing, his Office of a Minister, Steward of the mysteries of God shall still remaine; why should not a ruling Elder or Deacon remaine an Elder or Deacon in the Church as well? all are Officers Ordained of Christ alike given to his Church, Officers

ficers chosen and Ordained by laying on of hands alike, but wee suppose you will not say a Deacon in such a case should remaine a Deacon in the Catholique Church, therefore not a Minister.

Secondly, wee shall now consider what is here said, and first this language of a Minister in the usuall Church as a particular Church hath union with and is a part of the universall, it is an unusuall expression to us, and to the Scripture phrase, and therefore beare with us if wee fall short of your meaning; the usuall Church in *England* hath beene either the Arch-Deacons Church in the Deanaries, or Dioceſan in the Bishoprick, or Provinciall or Nationall, but wee hope that there is no such intended here, yet to all this and the jurisdiction thereof particular Churches have been subject as parts there.

But if by usuall Church you meane a Classical, Provinciall or Nationall Church, wee must intreat better grounds for any of these, and therefore wee must confesse our minde and meaning is not so, that wee looke at a Minister of a particular Church in any such relation to the usuall and intermediate Church betweene it and the Catholique. The second sense therefore we owne and acknowledge as before. But whether this be contrary to the judgement and practise of the universall Church, wee know not, because it is hard for us know what the universall Church judgeth, except we could heare it speake or see its practise; if the onely head Prophet and Shepherd of the Church Jesus Christ be fit to declare her judgement, we will be tryed thereby, who we know hath set Elders in every particular Church, *Act.* 14.23. to watch over their particular flock, *Act.* 20.28. but not over any other Church that wee can finde. Neither doth this destroy the unity or Communion of the Catholique Church, nor of particular Churches one with another as is said, for Churches may enjoy brotherly Communion one with another, without such stated formes, under the power and authority of one another, as hath been shewed before.

For if he be not a Minister to other Churches, then are not the Churches of God one, nor the Communion which they have together on, nor the Ministers one, nor the flocke which they feed one. Reply.

In what sense is intended to have the Ministers one, and flocke one, we doe not see. If you meane one by one visible Government over the Catholique Church, wherein there is a subordination of Churches and Ministers, you must at last rise to Oecomenicall Answ.

Pastor, or Councell, that must be the supreme, which can scarce ever be had. If you meane an unity by brotherly Communion in offices of love and mutuall helpefulnesse of Churches and Ministers, without usurpation, such an unity and Community is not destroyed, and the argument doth not follow: Cannot many distinct societies of Townes or Corporations make up one County, except the Major or Constable in one Towne be a Major or Constable in others also? By this Reason the Deacon of one Church is the Deacon of all, or else the unity is destroyed.

Reply. *If the Pastor derive all his authority from the Church, when the Church hath set him aside, what right hath he to administer among that people?*

Answ. True, but we say he derives all his authority from Christ, by the Church indeed, applying that office to him, to which the authority is annexed by the institution of Christ, hence being the Minister of Christ unto them, if they without Christ depose him, they hinder the exercise of his Office, but his right remaines.

Reply. *As they give right to an unworthy man to minister amongst them, if they cal him unjustly, so they take right from the worthy, if they unjustly depose him.*

Answ. We grant there is a parity *in foro externo*, but as in the call, his outward cal consists in the election of the calling, and the acceptation of the called, to compleat his power of administration. Now this by Christ in his Church may be destroyed in a just censure without his consent, but cannot unjustly be wrung from him without his consent, & therefore he may hold his right, till either hee be justly deposed or willingly relinquish the same upon their injurious interruption of the use of his right.

Reply. *And whereas you say the Minister is for the Ministery, and the Office for the execution, and so the Pastor and the flocke are relatives, and therefore, if their election gave him authority among them to feed, their casting him off hath stripped him of the same power they gave him.*

Answ. Wee grant it is so, yet the execution may bee unjustly hindred, though the right and Office remaine: But we may well retort this argument upon the Minister of the usuall or Catholicke Church. Thus if the Minister bee for the Ministery, and the Office for the execution, and so the Pastor and flock be relatives, then hee that may justly for ever be hindred of all execution of the Ministery and hath no power to censure his flock, or cannot so much as justly approve and admonish them for the same, surely hee hath a poore Office and Ministery, but such a Minister that hath no particular Congregation, that is his flock under his charge, may justly

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ly be excluded out of all Churches, and cannot censure or reprove his Catholique or usuall Church for the same, therefore he is indeed no Minister, and and hath no Office in the Church of God.

CHAP. XVII.

Position 8.

THat one Minister cannot performe any Ministeriall act in another Congregation.

The Preaching of the Word and publique Prayer in the Congregation, meet together solemnely to worship God, &c. are properly Ministeriall, &c. Reply.

Concerning our true sense and meaning in our answer to this Position wee have spoken in the second consideration of the second and third Positions, to which wee referre the Reader, onely here wee must ingenuously confesse that our expression, That a Minister exercising in another Church, doth it not by vertue of any calling, but onely by his gifts, is not so cleare, but may occasion stumbling, yet the the next words following doe fully expresse our mindes, *viz.* that he doth not put forth such a Ministeriall act of authority and power in dispensing of Gods Ordinances, as a Minister doth performe to that Church, whereunto hee is called to be a Minister, for so hee doth not performe any Ministeriall act with that authority: hee doth to his owne which further cleares up our expression in the second consideration, *viz.* that he is a Pastor of none but his proper flocke, although some acts of his Office may extend beyond his owne flocke, as we have shewed before; and therefore in this sense we may still conclude, that if the question be put to any Minister (so exercising in another church) which was once put to our Saviour, *By what authority dost thou these things?* let him study how to give an answer, for wee have not yet learned it from this Reply. We confesse there are some godly learned servants of Christ, who possibly may bee otherwise minded, and thinke that a Minister preaching in another Congregation, doth it onely as a gifted man; as the Refuter of Doctor *Downam* (with others in former times of Reformation) beleeved also. But we desire that if any difference appeare herein, it may bee no prejudice to the same cause for substance wee maintaine, if by sundry lines wee all meet at last in the same point. Answ.

FINIS.